Mac Grianna and Conrad: A Case Study in Translation

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I confirm that the word count of this thesis is less than 100,000 words

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Más mall is mithid – Brian, mo ghrá geal, níl focail ann, mo bhuíochas do achan rud.

Abstract

This case study of Mac Grianna's translations of four of Conrad's works evaluates the quality of these translations and assesses how he brings his own individual qualities as a creative writer to the act of translation. Against a background of developments in translation studies in Europe and Ireland, his work is contextualised and analysed in the light of contemporary commentators, Peadar Ua Laoghaire and Gearóid Ó Nualláin, with an examination of their stipulations regarding the translation of the Irish language from English, notably the promulgation of *caint na ndaoine* to the exclusion of any other style or register of the Irish language. An analysis is made of Mac Grianna's creative ability using Guildford's nine characteristics of the creative individual. Each quality is examined and assessed as it relates to the translations of Conrad, using samples from the translations to demonstrate how they illustrate these characteristics. All examples from the translations are accessed through *Tobar na Gaedhlige.* French translations of the samples are given as a further method of comparison. Some complexities of Conrad's style are analysed, such as his use of de-verbal negative adjectives and Mac Grianna's response to these challenges is investigated. Criticisms that stem from his use of *caint na ndaoine* in these translations are examined, and his use of storytelling devices such as alliteration, rhythm, and synonymic adjectives are demonstrated.

Abbreviations

The following abbreviations have been used:

AF……. Amy Foster

AlF…… Almayer's Folly

DCA……. Díth Chéille Almayer

LFA…….. La Folie Almayer

MD…… An Máirnéalach Dubh

NN…….The Nigger of the 'Narcissus'/Le Nègre du 'Narcisse'

SB…… Séideán Bruithne

T……Typhoon/Typhon

FGB…..... Foclóir Gaeilge Béarla

EID…..... English-Irish Dictionary

Access to Contents

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Introduction

The question of translation has always been an important and sometimes fraught one in terms of the Irish language and its relationship to English, which usurped and almost entirely replaced Irish as the first language spoken in Ireland. This had culturally far-reaching consequences, including the psychological effects of the loss of language upon the population of Ireland. The use and misuse that this loss was put to by colonial English forces in the portrayal of the Irish character has been going on for the past 400 years. Following efforts by Conradh na Gaeilge in the late nineteenth century to revive the language, and with the establishment of the Free State in 1921, Irish became enshrined constitutionally as the first language of the country, even though a large part of the population no longer understood or spoke it. As part of the effort to revive it in a proactive way, reading material in Irish was provided for the population in the nineteen thirties. Scéim Aistriúcháin an Ghúim[1] was implemented by the newly-formed government of the Irish Free State. A wide variety of authors and books were translated, of varying genres and quality, some of which, though bestsellers in their day, are now forgotten, or have fallen out of favour among literary *cognoscenti*[2]

Among those who were employed to translate books for the Scheme was Seosamh Mac Grianna and one of the authors whom he translated was Joseph Conrad, translating four pieces of work by him, namely *The Nigger of the Narcissus* (*NN*) entitled *An Máirnéalach Dubh* (*MD*) in 1933, *Typhoon* (*T*) entitled *Séideán Bruithne* (*SB*) and *Amy Foster (AF*) in 1935 as one volume and *Almayer's Folly* (*AF*) entitled *Dith Céille Almayer* (*DCA) in* 1936. Other authors he translated include Sir Walter Scott (*Ivanhoe*) and Lew Ayres (*Ben Hur*). Conrad is perhaps the only author that Mac Grianna translated whose literary reputation is not only intact but has grown enormously in the intervening years, demonstrated by the huge research carried out into his writing, and who is now considered to be a proto-modernist figure in English

[1] See Uí Laighléis, G.(2018) *Gallán an Ghúim* Chapter 2 and Uí Laighléis, G.(2007) 'An Gúm: The Early Years' in *Celtic Literarures in the Twentieth Century*, Mac Mathúna, S. and Ó Corráin, A. (eds) Research Institute for Irish and Celtic Studies, University of Uster/Moscow Languages of Slavonic Culture for analysis of the setting up of the scheme .

[2] E.g. *Comin' through the Rye* by Helen Mathers, which was translated by Mac Grianna as *Ag Teacht fríd an tSeagal*.

language literature.[3] We cannot know for certain the reasons why Mac Grianna translated four works by Conrad, the only writer for whom more than one work is translated as part of Scéim Aistriúcháin an Ghúim. It seems that Mac Grianna was a devotee of Conrad's work, evidenced by a letter from Mac Grianna to the Committee of An Gúm, detailing all the works by Conrad that he had read, (in all sixteen of Conrad's works are named by Mac Grianna as having been read by him,[4]) and that Conrad influenced Mac Grianna's writing.[5] Another possible reason for translating more than one of Conrad's works is that the works are relatively short, comprising a novel, two novellas and a short story, and that the entire word count for the four works might only equal or be less than that of a large novel such as *Ben Hur*. As the translators on the scheme were paid by the word,[6] this would have been an important consideration for Mac Grianna. The first three works were published in 1933, with *Dith Chéille Almayer* appearing in 1936, near the end of Mac Grianna's writing life. The problems that caused him to declare '*Thraigh an tobar'* in 1935[7] may, possibly, have affected, or indeed may have been affected by his work on the translation.

Mac Grianna is considered one of the foremost writers in twentieth century Irish literature, and Conrad's reputation as a literary great has only grown since his death. That someone of Mac Grianna's reputation translates four works of someone of Conrad's reputation is worthy of further investigation and analysis. There are caveats to this bald statement: the work was done by Mac Grianna mainly for monetary gain and his attitude to both the act of translation and to An Gúm itself was one of disdain and bitterness, as much of his correspondence testifies. The work has been examined over the years in many contexts, often with Mac Grianna's dislike for the scheme and his contempt for *céird an aistritheora* (the translator's task), to the fore in these discussions. Maolmhaodhóg Ó Ruairc (1988) looks at the context of Mac Grianna translating for An Gúm in some detail and concludes that in the end the translations that Seosamh made were worthwhile. He notes in particular

[3] See Watt, I (1980) *Conrad in the Nineteenth Century* London, Chatto and Windus, *passim*.
[4] See National Archives/GAEL/AN GÚM/A004 and GAEL/AN GÚM/A0106.
[5] See Ó Dochartaigh (1981) for an analysis of the influence of Conrad's *Lord Jim* on Mac Grianna's *Mo Bhealach Féin*.
[6] See UI Laighléis (2018) *Gallán an Ghúim*, p.54 for details of payment rates.
[7] A note in the manuscript of *Dá mBíodh Ruball ar an Éan* states 'Thraigh an tobar sa tsamhradh, 1935. Ní scríobhfaidh níos mó. Rinne mé mo dhícheall agus is cuma liom'. See Mac Congail (1990) p.47.

with regard to the translations of Conrad, that 'Thar aon rud ba mhórscríbhneoir an fichiú haois é Conrad agus ba dhána an mhaise don té a mhaífeadh nach ndearna sé a leas do Sheosamh an dua agus an t-am a chaith se agus na ceithre cinn d'urscéalta Conrad á n-aistriu aige'. (Ó Ruairc,1988). Ó Ruairc understands that these particular translations, because they are by a great writer such as Conrad, are worth the time and effort put in by Mac Grianna in order to translate them. Gearóidín Uí Laighléis's book *Gallán an Ghúim* (2018), looks at An Gúm's relationship with three writers, Máirtín Ó Cadhain, Seosamh Mac Grianna and Seán Tóibín. The book details all the translation particulars, including payment details and any correspondence that is still extant in connection with each book. She mentions the details of the letter of complaint received by An Gúm from one of its readers with regard to the translation of *Almayer's Folly*. This letter and the correspondence surrounding it are discussed in Chapter 4. She points out:

> Cionn is go raibh an-chuid deacrachtaí aige le *Almayer's Folly* mhol Domhnall Mac Grianna do Sheosamh ceann níos fusa a dhéanamh ná *Lord Jim* le Conrad, leabhar a raibh an conradh sínithe aige ina thaobh. Dúirt sé leis gurbh fhearr scríbhinní Chonrad a fhágáil ina dhiaidh ar feadh tamaill ar scor ar bith. Is cosúil gur aontaigh Seosamh scíth a thabhairt do Chonrad…(Uí Laighléis, 2018 p.150)

It would seem, then, that Mac Grianna needed to put more effort into his translations of Conrad's work than perhaps the other translations that he made. According to Uí Laighléis, the fact that he had signed up to do another translation of Conrad, that of *Lord Jim,* might suggest a desire on his part to put Conrad's work into Irish, despite the difficulty of the task. It seems clear that Mac Grianna put more thought into his Conrad translations than was perhaps required of him in order to translate other works.

The fact that translation work as a whole required a level of creativity from Mac Grianna is demonstrated by Mac Corraidh in *Seosamh Mac Grianna, Aistritheoir* (2004), particularly at the level of lexis. The book comprises a collection of Mac Grianna's translation usages which are often unavailable in any dictionary or collection of idioms.

> Tá scoth na Gaeilge ins na haistriúcháin…Is léir iontu an fhorbairt chruthaitheach ag an aistritheoir ar a shainbhealach féin ar an chiste sinsearach focal sa Ghaeilge sna meafair shaibhre a bhí aige.(Mac Corraidh, 2004 p.14)

Examples from the Conrad translations in Mac Corraidh's book include *croitheadh inchinne* (*SB* p.41) for 'concussion' (*T* p.170) and *rubóg* (*SB* p.53) for 'lick/licked' (*T* p.177). Gearóidín Uí Laighléis also gives consideration to Mac Grianna's translations in general, including those that he made of Conrad's work. She comments that 'gaisce scríbhneoireachta atá déanta ag Gaelú a dhéanamh ar phrós deacair mínádurtha Joseph Conrad.' (20018, p.267). This complexity of style in Joseph Conrad is investigated in Chapter 4, where particular problems posed by his style are examined and Mac Grianna's response to these complexities is scrutinised.

Chapter 1 gives an overview of the development of translation theory from the time of Marcus Tullius Cicero (106 BCE–43 BCE) onwards, and marks its development through theories of 'domestication' and 'foreignisation' towards more philosophical approaches, such as that of Steiner, and the postmodernism of Derrida, as well as considering contemporary theory, such as post-colonialism, and how it can be applied to translation in Ireland. Translation within the island of Ireland from earliest times is also examined, demonstrating a robustly 'domesticated' tradition, as well the effects of colonialism on translation within the two languages on the island. Polysystem theory is considered with regard to how it applies to the Irish context. Nida's search for 'equivalence' and 'equivalent effect' is also examined, as is Venuti's theory of the invisibility of the translator.

Chapter 2 provides an assessment of the contemporary context in which Mac Grianna was making his translations. Perhaps the most respected and powerful commentator on the requirements for translation from English to Irish was an tAthair Peadar Ua Laoghaire, whose story *Séadna,* published in 1904 became a key text in the revival of the Irish Language. Ua Laoghaire was a vocal proponent of *caint na ndaoine* as the form which written Irish should take in the envisioned new era of a Gaelic Ireland. His vociferous dislike of earlier forms of written Irish such as that of Céitinn was very influential in the development of the written language in all its forms in the twentieth century. Úa Laoghaire's methods are examined, particularly his translation of the English phrase 'forgive and forget'. In the light of this what would now be viewed as prescriptivism on Ua Laoghaire's part, his disciple Gearóid Ó Nualláin provides 18 principles which, he proposes, must be taken into account when translating English to Irish. These principles are examined with reference to Mac Grianna's translations of Conrad, and an assessment is made as to whether his translations uphold such principles.

Chapter 3 examines Mac Grianna's creativity in the light of Guilford's characteristics that are possessed by creative individuals. Guildford was one of the first psychologists to study the traits and attributes that combine to produce creativity and he proposed eight qualities or abilities that are possessed by creative individuals to give an indication of the level of creative ability that such an individual might possess. An examination of a section of translation from *The Nigger of the Narcissus)/An Máirnéalach Dubh Le Nègre du Narcisse* provides us with insights into how Mac Grianna demonstrates his possession of these characteristics through his decisions and choices in these translations. An analysis of some of Mac Grianna's more unusual usages of vocabulary, such as *trillse*, and *breacuithe le scéimh,* is given, in order to demonstrate his unusual level of creativity in these translations.

Chapter 4 is an examination of the complexities of Conrad's style and how Mac Grianna copes with them. The chapter also examines how his translation of this complex style left him open to criticism and accusations of inadequate translating, and 'bad Irish'. Conrad's style has been the subject of much analysis through the years and particular aspects of this style, such as its use of pre-verbal negative adjectives, as well as the influence of Conrad's native Polish, and his high level of facility in French, coupled with the influence of nineteenth century French writers such as Gustave Flaubert and Guy de Maupassant, combine to provide a rich and complex blend that Mac Grianna must render in clear and comprehensible Irish, without diminishing or losing the import and impact of the original. This chapter considers these elements and Mac Grianna's response to them, and the level of creativity within that response. The chapter also demonstrates how Mac Grianna's translations can shed light on and enrich our knowledge of the shades of meaning and significance within his own writings, notably that of the famous opening line of his novel *Mo Bhealach Féin* (1940). The instances of usage of progressive aspect by Mac Grianna are also assessed, to demonstrate that his use of this form in his translations outstrips Conrad's use in English, and that the Irish language use of the progressive aspect is much greater than that of English**.** Mac Grianna's difficulties with the translation of *Almayer's Folly* leave him open to criticism of inadequate translation, and difficulties in translating Conrad's long complex sentences also leave him open to using what was then the much derided *Gaeilge bhacach*.

Methodology

I have amassed a large collection of examples from the texts in order to compare Mac Grianna's translations to the Conrad originals. In order to collect these examples, I have used *Tobar na Gaedhilge* (2016) to retrieve them, in both English and Irish, as well as their French equivalents as a further method of comparison. *Tobar na Gaedhilghe* is a software search and retrieval system for Irish language texts. It stores Irish language texts, and translations of these texts where available, in English, French, German and Russia, and all of Mac Grianna's translations for An Gúm are stored here, as well as some of his own writings. Individual words and phrases can be retrieved from these texts to show all the instances where a word has occurred in the text, together with the corresponding sentences in the English and French texts. A concordance of any word can also be retrieved, as well as the frequency with which it occurs within the text. The software includes texts from many authors from all areas of the Gaeltacht, including Mac Grianna's brother Séamus Ó Grianna. Comparisons, therefore, can be made of both brothers' usage at the level of both lexis and syntax, as well as similar comparisons with other writers, notably other writers from the Donegal Gaeltacht. These examples are brought together for comparison and analysis in order to illuminate and support critical exploration of Mac Grianna's approach to translation of the Conrad texts.

Chapter 1

Review of Translation Studies

Introduction: Background to Translation Studies

The particular problems that arise in translating from one language to another have exercised the minds of writers and translators from antiquity to the present day. Roman writers such as Marcus Tullius Cicero[8] and Horace[9] have written about the complexities of translation, and within the Christian tradition**,** Saint Jerome[10] has gone so far as to create what might be regarded as the first theory of translation. Translation of the Bible was one of the great bones of contention throughout the early and middle years of the Christian church in Europe, where the very act of translation itself might end in accusations of heresy and indeed, in some cases (notably Tyndale[11] in England and Dolet[12] in France) the translator's death.

In Ireland, translation from and into the Irish language is evidenced in manuscript glosses since the arrival of Christianity in Ireland in the fifth century. Translation practice from this period in Ireland's history is, according to Michael Cronin, the foundation of translation in Ireland that continues today:

> The vitality of translation in medieval Ireland has continued to the present day, and the presence of written translation for over a thousand years challenges homogenous, monolithic, monolingual interpretations of Irish culture. (1996, p.6)

Cronin points out that '…The picture that emerges from translation history in that period is one of a multilingual island, creatively alert to the news from elsewhere'. (1996 p.9). This is a picture of integration and interaction with Europe, not a liminalised or colonised one, but one in which translation plays a positive role in

[8] *De optimo genere oratum*, (46bce) see p.9
[9] *Ars poetica*, (c.19bce) see p.9
[10] *De optimo genere interpretandi*, (395 ce) see p.11
[11] William Tyndale (c.1490-1536), whose English Bible was banned by Henry VII. It was later used as the basis for the King James version (1611).
[9] Étienne Dolet (1509-1546) who was condemned by the theological faculty of the Sorbonne for what was deemed to be a heretical translation of one of Plato's dialogues (see Munday, p.37).

maintaining links to European scholarship, and to the native learning of filí and brehons. Classical scholarship mingled with Christian belief and native learning, with translation, above all, as a basis for the dissemination of knowledge in all its forms.

In Ireland, as elsewhere, classical and Christian texts form the bulk of translation throughout the medieval and Renaissance periods. Bible translation in general continued to exert influence on theories of translation through Schleiermacher's hermeneutics in the nineteenth century (which continues to impact upon translation theory today) and Nida's linguistic-based theories in the 1970s.

The influence of Augustanism and Romanticism in literature in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries also influenced theories of translation**,** particularly in relation to the translation of classical texts from Ancient Greece and Rome. English commentators such as the poet and playwright John Dryden in the eighteenth, and the scholar Francis Newman and the poet Matthew Arnold in the nineteenth century are notable for developing the discussion on notions of 'literalness' and 'equivalence'.

In Ireland, Romantic interest in ancient lore, as well as a burgeoning nationalism, was responsible for translations of Irish myth and song by, among others, Charlotte Brooke and Samuel Ferguson. The revival of interest in the Irish language, the struggle for independence and the founding of the Irish Free State in the early years of the twentieth century combined to create a debate on the form the modern language would take, led by an tAthair Peadar Ua Laoghaire, and on the policies which determined how it would be translated in future.

In the later twentieth century, a seminal work on the subject is George Steiner's 'After Babel' which recalls Schleiermacher in his theory of 'hermeneutic motion'. This was followed by an explosion in translation theory in the late twentieth century, influenced not only by Steiner but by post-modern theorists such as Jacques Derrida. These in turn led theorists (for example, Susan Basnett and HarishTrivedi)[13] to examine translation in the light of movements such as feminism, and post-colonialist theory. Post-colonialist theory has a particular relevance to

[13] See Basnett, S.and Trivedi, H.(eds) (1999) *Post-colonial Translation: Theory and Practice*, London and New York, Routledge, *passim*

Ireland as a colonised country under British rule for many centuries. Cronin (1996) and Tymoczko (1999) have examined the history of translation between the Irish and English languages as well as its implications for the Irish language in the present day.

Translation before the Twentieth Century

Throughout history, much of the deliberation on the act of translation is to be found in musings by translators themselves in prefaces and introductions to their works. They are often writers and scholars whose reflections demonstrate their translation processes and their linguistic and artistic priorities within that process. Marcus Tullius Cicero, Roman rhetorician and politician, discusses his translation from Greek of Aeschines and Demosthenes in his introduction to *De optimo genere oratorum* (46bce/1960 ce)

> And I did not translate them as an interpreter, but as an orator, keeping the same ideas and forms, or as one might say, the 'figures' of thought, but in language which conforms to our usage. And in so doing, I did not hold it necessary to render word for word, but I preserved the general style and force of the language.' (Cicero 46bce/1960 ce: p.364)

Cicero's description of the translator as 'orator' rather than as 'interpreter', which at that time described a word-for-word translator whose work was there solely to assist a reader of the source language (often Greek), suggests for the first time the potential for some form of creativity in the translation process, 'free' rather than a literal 'word for word' rendition that was the custom in the education system in ancient Rome when translating Greek authors into Latin[14]. Cicero's preserving of the 'general style and force of the language' indicates a search for some form of equivalence between the source and target languages which has been at the heart of translation theory debate right up to the present day. It also demonstrated that the translator was more than a functionary whose role is merely mechanical: the translator has a responsibility to render a translation that somehow incorporates the qualities of both target and source languages, which creates the greatest possible equivalence between the two.

Cicero's views are echoed in the Roman poet Horace's in his *Ars Poetica*

[14] See Venuti (2012) p.14

> It is difficult to treat the common matter in a way that is particular to you ; and you would do better to turn a song of Troy into dramatic acts than to bring forth for the first time something that is unknown and unsung. Public material will be private property if you do not linger over the common and open way, and if you do not render word for word like a faithful translator (translated in Copeland, 1992; p.19)

Venuti interprets this as Horace advocating

> 'a rhetorical imitiation of the source text whereby the Homeric epics ('a song of Troy') become sites of invention for the Latin poet, the'public material' from which 'private' poems are produced, possibly through a change of genre. These poems are not so much 'new' as different in a way that exhibits a poet's individual talent' (Venuti 2012 p14).

Translation can provide a way for the translator to manipulate the source text to a personal or political agenda which may not necessarily exist in the original source text. This is an early indicator of the dichotomies with which theories of postcolonialism in translation are concerned, wherein the power imbalance of the colonising and colonised cultures allows, through translation, a distortion of the image of the colonised culture to fit the stereotype of the coloniser, thus legitimising the act of colonisation.

The earliest translations in Ireland are generally from Latin into Irish, and among them are tales from classical mythology, such as *Togail Troí*, as well as instructive medical texts and philosophical works. Literary texts were freely adapted to reflect aspects of Irish society of the time, but, as Nessa Ní Sheaghdha attests in *Translations and Adaptions into Irish,* Irish literary translation is geared towards its own audience to an even greater extent;

> Straightforward or literal translations was not the practice in these early days in Ireland; neither, for that matter, was it the practice on the continent of Europe, where vernacular paraphrases and summaries generally preceded full translations. But the manner in which these stories were adapted stylistically in the Irish literary mould to suit Irish taste is, to say the least, striking. (Ní Sheaghdha, 1984, p.1)

Regarding a translation of Virgil's *Aeneid,* Stanford suggests, in 'Towards a history of classical influences in Ireland' that translators were writing for their target audience and ignoring the demands of the source text;

> Whoever wrote this version is …greatly interested in genealogy, descriptions of heroes, fights, storms, monsters, strong emotions, and colours. But he ignores Virgil's touches of pathos and compassion and his subtler poetic

> effects…He fills in gaps in Virgil's narrative and sometimes rearranges it, being apparently confident that he knows better how to tell a good story. (Stanford, 1970, pp. 34-35)

Ní Sheaghdha equates this desire and ability to provide the translation with local colour and and interest to a genius, inherent in the Irish, for assimilation of an outside culture and subsuming it into their own:

> We do not have to search too deeply for an explanation for these remarkable idiosyncratic Irish adaptations of the classical stories: it is to be found in the history and tradition of Irish clerics. Their facility for assimilations and adaptation – an inherent characteristic of the Irish people – had already manifested itself clearly in the manner in which they had adapted the administrative set-up of the Church in early Ireland to suit their long-established native social system. And so, as story-telling was itself a long-established genre in the vernacular tradition, the classical stories were adapted to suit this native genre and the taste and expectations of the Irish audience. (Ní Sheaghda, 1984, p.3)

Medical and philosophical texts, whose purpose is instruction rather than entertainment, are not treated in so free a fashion. Their seriousness of purpose is reflected in close adherence to the source text, even replacing a native word 'cuisle' with the borrowed Latin 'puls', although the element of assimilation persists, as this word is then subsumed into Irish syntax with lenition in the genitive 'an phuls'.[15] The method of translating lends itself to a modern style, free from archaism, as Ní Sheaghdha explains:

> The use of this modern form of the language came about as a result of the manner in which the work was conducted, where the doctor-author translated *viva voce* and his amanuensis wrote from his dictation. (Ní Sheaghdha, 1984, p.9)

So in these early Irish translations, the purpose of the text dictates the method of translation: an example of what came to be known as 'Skopos' theory within translation studies.

Translation of the Bible, however, did not allow the same freedom of choice to translators. St Jerome in *De optimo genere interpretandi* defends himself vigorously from accusations of traducing the Divine Word of the Holy Scripture by employing

[15] See Ní Sheaghdha, (1984) p.9.

and contrasting different versions, that is, different source texts, in Greek and Hebrew[16], concluding that '

> …in interpreting the Old Testament, the Apostles and Evangelists sought the sense and not the words, and did not particularly take pains with syntax and style, so long as the truth lay open to understanding. (Jerome, E. H. (St Jerome) (395 ce/1997) p. 28)

adding that:

> 'Now I not only admit but freely proclaim that in translation (*interpretatione*) – except in the case of Sacred Scripture, where the very order of the words is a mystery- I render not word for word but sense for sense' (Jerome, E. H. (St Jerome 395 ce/1997) p. 23)

Jerome understood that 'word for word' translation would result in unintelligible stiltedness whereas 'sense for sense' translation led to a comprehensible approximation of the source text. In employing these two concepts as opposites, he might be said to have provided the basis for the two pillars of the debate which has continued within translation and translation studies to the present day, that between 'literal' ('word for word') and 'free' ('sense for sense') translation.

Jerome's concerns are echoed in the words of Johannes Scotus Eriugena, the noted ninth-century Irish Hellenic scholar who states in *Versus de Ambiguis S. Maximi;*

> Whoever rejoices in the rhetorical cloak of words, let him seek grandiloquence, striving for the Ciceronian camp: but it will be enough for me if I can cull the plain sense with slow deliberate speech, following only the matter of the text. The internal value of the text is duly to be grasped: the bombast of the words is often deceptive. (quoted in Copeland,1991, p.54)

Eriugena however, rejects what he terms the 'grandiloquence' of the 'Ciceronian camp' in translation, in other words 'free' translation, with its suspiciously 'deceptive' 'bombast', which can compromise the 'internal value' of the text. Translation must not re-invent or in any way surpass the language of the source text or it will not fulfill its function of remaining true to the original: the 'internal value' must be illuminated and the 'plain sense' given without recourse to any expansion, explication or embellishment by the translator. The target audience here is not catered to, nor indulged, neither is the translator to bring any form of creativity to, or put any personal stamp upon his work, or he will distort the meaning of the source text and

[16] See Munday (2012) p.31.

traduce the ‘faithfulness’ of the translation. This pre-figures to some degree Venuti’s theory of the invisibility of the translator.

Eriugena’s position seems at odds with that of Jerome and his contemporaries, who, by denigrating the ‘literal’ translation that Eriugena endorses, helped to set in motion a tendency towards very free translating, where the translator’s literary ability and creativity resulted in translation which strayed further and further in meaning, lexis and syntax from the source text.[17]

The Reformation of the Church in the sixteenth century brought challenges to the position of Latin as the language of the Church by those who questioned the Church’s status quo and viewed its monolingualism as part of its power structure. Protestant reformers wished to see the translation of the Bible into the many different languages of Europe, but risked accusations of heresy, the punishment for which was death. Centuries before this, Jerome himself had felt it necessary to provide a sort of ‘get-out clause’ to protect himself from just such a charge - for this reason he had described the impossibility of translating from Sacred Scripture ‘where the very order of the words is a mystery’. Most notably, the Englishman William Tyndale (c1490 – 1536) (who was put to death for heresy in Antwerp,) produced a Bible in the English language, which formed the basis for future English translations, in particular, the St James Bible.

In Ireland the scholar Flaithrí Ó Maolchonaire commented on his process of translation from Spanish of the sacred text *Desiderius* (also known as *Sgáthán an Chrábhaidh*) published in Louvain in 1616. In the preface he claims he translates ‘ar son simplidheachta na stíli in ar sgríobhamar go sonnradhach chum leasa na ndaoine simplidhe, nach foil géarchúiseach i nduibheagán na Gaeilge’ (*Desiderius* p.1). Ó Maolchonaire’s priority is the communication of the text message within the context of the Reformation and Counter-Reformation. Comprehensibility and communication are the priorties of his translation and the reader of the target text is all-important. Schleiemacher would posit a similar view of target reader priority centuries later. Cronin describes how these simplifying techniques of translation affected the development of the Irish language:

[17] Leonardo Bruni(1369-1444) and Abraham Cowley (1618-1667) are examples of this ‘free’attitude to translation, see Munday (2012) pp.40-2

> The translations, the contact with other languages in continental Europe and the weakening hold of a bardic orthodoxy on the Irish language would in fact ultimately lead to the birth of modern Irish…The emphasis on greater simplicity and communicative effectiveness that guided the translation work in Louvain and elsewhere would embolden others in their rejection of strict adherence to bardic conventions.(Cronin 1996 p.63)

Simplification of the language (in this case, the Irish language) in translation and cross-pollenisation with other European languages in the seventeenth century had a significant effect on its development from an unyielding and artificially preserved literary construct to a spoken and written form which escaped the corset of classicism. The classical concept of language, one that divided it into two concepts, grammar, in other words, precision and clarity in writing, and rhetoric, effective style in communication of a particular message – also influenced thinking on translation; translators not only had to be fully competent in the source language, they must be highly accomplished writers of their native language, capable of rendering a translation that demonstrated their ability in both these disciplines.

Reacting against this tendency towards 'free' translation, the English poet and dramatist John Dryden came close to articulating a system for translating that covered different types of translation and which could be employed as a general rule of thumb for translators. Translation was by now an expression of the translator's creativity, an interpretation, in the modern sense of the word, rather than as a faithful report of the source text's content – providing the 'spirit' of the source text's substance, rather than transcription of its content. In his preface to Ovid's Epistles, Dryden attempts to define translation types, dividing translation into three classifications, of varying degrees of efficacy:

> All translation I suppose may be reduced to these three heads.
>
> First, that of Metaphrase, or of tourning an Authour word by word, and Line by Line, from one Language into another…The second way is that of Paraphrase, or Translation with Latitude, where the Authour is kept in view by the Translator, so as never to be lost, but his words are not so strictly follow'd as his sense, and that too is admitted to be amplyfied but not altered…The third way is that of Imitation, where the Translator (if now he has not lost that Name) assumes the liberty not only to vary from the words and sence, but to forsake them both as he sees occasion: and taking only some hints from the Original, to run division on the ground-work, as he pleases. (quoted in Venuti, 2012 p.39)

The style of translating that Dryden places in the middle, which he terms 'Paraphrase', and which, clearly, is the style he endorses, is indeed a kind of middle way: it neither slavishly reproduces a 'word by word' rendition of the source text, losing the 'sence [sic] of it along the way and making it difficult to read and to understand, nor veers wildly away from the source text, rendering it unrecognisable from the target language, and potentially losing crucial elements of meaning. For Dryden, such a translator is literally taking a 'liberty' with the source text. 'Imitation' could be used as a derogatory term, to indicate falseness – 'counterfeit' was one of the word's meanings in 1601.[18]

The first stand-alone text, in English, on translation was Alexander Fraser Tytler's 'Essay on the principles of translation' (1790). Like Ó Maolchonaire, over one hundred and fifty years earlier, Tytler placed the emphasis on the needs of readers of the target language text, rather than focusing on the translator's responsibility to reproduce faithfuly the felicities of style of the source text's author. His three rules of translation include providing a complete rendition of the source text, translating in the same style as the source author, and reproducing the target text with the same ease and naturalness of the original text, ranking these laws in this order of importance. He states that this hierarchy should determine where a translator should, in his words, 'sacrifice' any aspect of the source text, thus leading to the conclusion that sense takes precedence over style and style over ease or naturalness.

In Germany the proto-Romantic philosoper Johann Gottfried Herder (1744-1803), whose work on language and ideas greatly influenced Romantic writers such as Goethe, had a profound influence on Friedrich Schleiermacher (1768-1834), now considered the father of modern hermeneutics, in his seminal work *Methoden des Übersetzens* ('On the different methods of translating'). One distinctive feature of his work is his characterisation of the translator as two different types, the 'Dolmetscher', the commercial and business translator, and the 'Übersetzer', the translator of literature, whose work, for Schleiermacher, could bring an element of creativity to the language, and bring the source text and target text readers together in mutual understanding.

[18] See *The Shorter Oxford English Dictionary, Volume 1* Oxford University Press (1983) p.438.

Schleiermacher's analysis of the act of translation is comprehensive, incorporating an understanding of fluctuations in meaning over the passage of time within a language's vocabulary, as well as the variations of dialect;

> …. the dialects of the different clans that make up a people, and the different ways a language or dialect develops in different centuries, already constitute different languages in a stricter sense, between which it is often necessary to to translate…(Venuti, 2012 p.44).

Schleiermacher was concerned with widening literary and cultural avenues of learning for the German people and saw translation of the classical texts, for example, and great writers of other literatures (he himself translated Shakespeare) as a means of improvement in education for them. In order to do this the translator had to 'move the reader towards the writer' and give him '…through the translation the impression he would have received as a German reading the work in the original language' (Venuti 2012 p.49). This does not mean that the target text should read as if it had been originally written in German: it should in fact have an alienating effect on the reader to educate him in the foreign culture of the source text.

Schleiermacher's theories continue to influence thinking on translation up to the present day, notably Steiner's 'hermenutic motion' and Venuti's 'foreignisation' and 'domestication'. He also anticipated and influenced the 'Sapir-Whorf hypothesis'[19] with his (Herder-influenced) assertion that 'every human being is, on the one hand, in the power of the language he speaks….the form of his ideas are all preordained by the language by which he was born and raised: both his intellect and his imagination are bound by it' (Venuti 2012 p46). Schleiermacher seems to suggest here that there is a kind of predestination in thought and expression, which is shaped by the language in which an individual thinks, in other words, that language creates thought, rather than vice versa: however, he goes on to give the other side of this argument 'On the other hand, every free-thinking intellectually independent individual shapes the language in his turn.' (Venuti, 2012, p.46). There is again a sort of dichotomy here that forms a common thread within translation theory: the search for equivalence often consists of the translator trying to bring

[19] This term is given to the work of linguists Sapir and Whorf and generally refers to theories of language relativism, stemming from Whorf's work in the Native American Hopi language (1956). It should be noted that neither linguist developed such a hypothesis, but the term arose from their work. See Hill, J.H. and Mannheim, B. (1992) pp.381 – 406

together opposing poles of meaning, not just within the source and target languages, but within the structure of language.

In the nineteenth century, Britain was experiencing an increase in translations of literary works from other European countries, such as Germany and Russia. Poet and scholar Matthew Arnold and classics scholar Francis Newman engaged in debate about the best method of translating literature from other languages. Newman, who had published a translation of Homer, espoused a foreignising use of archaic language in translating from Greek and Latin which Arnold disparaged. He also claimed that Newman's translation lacked Homer's 'grand style', as he termed it. Although Arnold's arguments at times lack coherence, his insistence on reproducing the style of the original author in a work of literature echoes Schleiermacher's 'Übersetzer', the translator who must share the original author's sensitivity and, to some degree, literary ability.

> The successful translator of Homer will have, (or he cannot succeed) that true sense for his subject and that disinterested love of it, which are, both of them, so rare in literature and so precious. (Arnold, 1861/1978 p.68)

Ireland in the nineteenth century, as in previous centuries, had experienced a much greater and more intense level of inter-lingual translation than England, as a direct result of British colonial rule and the emergence of English as the language, at first, of the powerful minority and gradually of the majority of the population. Whereas hitherto, translations of the classics might be undertaken in Irish as well as in English, the effects of conquest, colonialism and the Penal Laws, were causing the Irish language to decline in status and become the argot of the dispossessed Catholic peasantry. As the language declined, its history and literature increased in interest to scholars and antiquarians and translation of Irish texts and manuscripts became a priority. Scholars, in order to save the language, began to translate its early literature into English, ironically re-inforcing the power and status of the English language. As Cronin states:

> A paradoxical consequence of translation activity in this colonial context was that the scholars and translators who were most to the fore in defending the intrinsic value of native Irish language and culture made a significant contribution, through translation, to the strengthening of the English language in Ireland and to the marginalisation of Irish in the public life of the country. (Cronin, 1996, p.92)

Translations of an earlier literature in Irish by scholars such as Charlotte Brooke and Samuel Ferguson placed the Irish language in the realm of the antiquary, increasing its connection to the sort of heroic, lost past that appealed to the ethos of the Romantic movement, while serving the political purpose of espousing an Irish nationalism that could exist within a British colonial context. Brooke's translations followed the domesticating tradition, transposing early and medieval Irish texts into a fluently Augustan style. Ferguson was more circumspect, regarding translation from Irish into English as potentially diminishing the power and subtlety of the original, stating that 'the idiomatic differences give to the translation an uncouth and difficult hesitation '(Ferguson, 1834, p.529).

Linguistic Theories of translation

These early reflections on translation stemmed from the experiences of translators, who generalised their individual experiences of translating and translation, but are of necessity unscientific in the modern sense of the adjective. It was only in the twentieth century that translators and translation theorists began to develop theories of translation that were more systematic, based on developments in linguistics, and, latterly, on philosophical theories such as deconstruction and post-colonialism. Developments in linguistics were utilised to attempt to provide a more scientifically based method for translation. Ferdinand de Saussure's linguistic theories of 'langue' and 'parole' were hugely influential upon Roman Jakobson,[20] as was Noam Chomsky's transformational grammar on Eugene Nida.[21] The possibility or otherwise of achieving equivalence from source to target languages in translation was at the core of the debate.

In 'On Linguistic Aspects of Translation' Jakobson examines translation in the light of Saussure's 'langue' - 'signifier' (the signal, usually the word, whether in written or oral form) and 'signified' (the concrete object or concept behind the signifier), that come together to form the 'sign'. He posits three forms of translation: intralingual, translation within one language, such as the use of synonyms or explanatory amplifications; interlingual, translation between two different languages; intersemiotic, translation in non-verbal communication, such as gesture, or

[20] See Munday (2012) pp.58 - 61.
[21] *Ibid* pp.61-4.

translation into another medium, such as the film adaptation of a book. The concept of interlingual equivalence is then examined in the light of Saussure's 'parole', the specific use of 'langue' in everyday speech and writing. Jakobson states that;

> Equivalence in difference is the cardinal problem of language and the pivotal concern of linguistics…Any comparison of two languages implies an examination of their mutal translatability; widespread practice of interlingual communication, particularly translating activities, must be kept under constant scrutiny by linguistic science.(Venuti, 20012, p.127)

Jakobson rejects the concept of linguistic determinism, also known as linguistic relativism, that of the so-called 'Sapir-Whorf hypothesis' which contends that language pre-determines, rather than arises from, thought and perception. He states that in interlingual translation, what he terms 'entire messages in some other language' must be conveyed rather than 'separate code-units', so that, in the example he cites, 'cottage cheese' must be translated as an 'entire message' rather than as the two separated 'code units' of 'cottage' and 'cheese'. This is perhaps the clearest example of Saussurean 'langue ' and 'parole' influencing Jakobson's thinking, where the entire unit 'cottage cheese' equates with Saussure's 'langue' and the separate code units 'cottage' and 'cheese' with parole.

For Jakobson, all languages are translatable, but dissimilarities do exist within lexical and syntactic forms such as gender, when nouns conform to different patterns, to which masculine and feminine forms are attributed), aspect, (where the internal tenses of verb forms do not differ cross-linguistically), and semantic fields (the example he gives is that of expressions which denote familial relationships – 'Geschwister' in German which becomes 'brothers and sisters' in English). When speaking of gender in languages, he suggests that the grammatical gender attributed to abstract concepts contributes to their personification in folklore: the personification of 'Death' as a man for example, in languages where the word falls within a masculine gender pattern in grammar. This fails to explain languages where such nouns are genderless, such as English, which also personifies such concepts*, ipso facto* endowing them with a gender - death is often portrayed as masculine in English, ('The Grim Reaper', for example). This idea seems, paradoxically, to echo in some part the linguistic determinism that he earlier rejects.

Jakobson's one exception with regard to the overall translatability of languages is that of poetry, where he declares that:

> Only creative transposition is possible: either intralingual transposition – from one poetic shape into another or interlingual transposition – from one language into another, or finally intersemiotic transposition – from one system of signs into another, e. g., from verbal art into music, dance, cinema or painting. (Venuti, 2012, p.13)

Jakobson's concept of 'creative transposition' seems to turn the vocabulary of translation on its head: 'creative transposition' in effect describes what would have formerly been known as 'free' translation, but Jakobson is not happy to use the term 'translation' for it. For him, creative writing cannot be limited within the bounds of translation: this seems to indicate a much narrower definition of the word 'translation' itself, keeping it within the bonds of earlier terms such as 'word for word' or 'literal'.

This act of creative translating, or 'transposition' as Jakobson terms it, had been at the root of debate until this point, whether translation of classical or sacred texts, such as Homer's *Iliad* or the Bible, and it is ironic that it is this type of translation which Jakobson finds ultimately untranslatable. It is also ironic that it should be a translator of the Bible, Eugene Nida, who first tried to take a scientific approach to translation in his book *Towards a Science of Translating* (1964). Nida had to train translators for Bible translation, and this practical work in the field inspired him to create systematic guidance for translators.

Nida used Chomsky's transformational grammar, with its theories of deep and surface structure as universal features of all languages, to underpin the process of translating by decoding and re-encoding the source and target languages from surface structure to deep structure in the source language, and reconstructing this process in the target language. Nida and his collaborator Taber, in *The Theory and Practice of Translation* (1969) devised three levels in the process of what they termed 'transfer' from source to target language – 'literal transfer', 'minimal transfer' and 'literary transfer'**.** Literal transfer entails word-for-word translation of the source language without consideration of lexis and syntax in the target language: minimal transfer requires lexic and syntactic correctness within the target language but no consideration of style or context: literary transfer encompasses all the elements of

style, context and syntax to provide what they termed ‘dynamic equivalence’ in the target language.

‘Dynamic’ and ‘formal’ equivalence were concepts devised by Nida to encompass earlier, vaguer terms such as ‘literal’ or ‘free’, but still they seem to echo these terms: ‘formal’ equivalence, where the message and structure of the source language is followed as closely as possible (using glosses and footnotes, if necessary) , and ‘dynamic’ equivalence, where the target language and the needs of its readers are given ‘substantially’ the same experience as readers of the source language texts.

Nida also devised three levels of semantic analysis – linguistic meaning, referential meaning and emotive or connotive meaning. Linguistic meaning is influenced by Chomsky’s theories and referred to the various syntactically-influenced meanings of a word – his example is the possessive pronoun ‘his’ which can mean ‘belonging to him’ in the phrase ‘his house’, or describe an inherent quality in the phrase ‘his kindness’. Referential meaning refers to the dictionary definition, and emotive or connotive meaning to the spectrum of associations a word possesses.

Nida played a crucial role in providing what appeared to be a structured and systematic approach to the day-to-day problems facing translators. Latterly his notion of a scientific approach to translation has been queried and he has faced charges of elitist prescriptivism, because as a Bible translator, the ultimate aim of his translation work was Christian, specifically Protestant, evangelising and propogandising. [22]

Following on from Nida’s self-styled scientific approach which sought to provide systematic procedures that could be adopted and adapted by translators, theories of functional translation were developed in Germany by Katharina Reiss, based on linguist Karl Bühler’s theory of the three functions of language.[23] These were informative function, expressive function and appellative function, which Reiss adapted as ‘informative’, ‘expressive’ and ‘operative’ translation. Within this text type model, Reiss’s ‘expressive’ translation involves creativity on the translator’s part,

[22] See Munday (2012) p.69.
[23] *Ibid*, pp.111-117

taking on the aims and outlook of the source text's author, whose style should be prioritised.

There is also a hierarchy of translation needs depending on the type of translation involved: the method of translating 'expressive' language such as metaphor is more important in an expressive text than in an informative one, where translation of its basic meaning is sufficient. This stance has been criticised, since even apparently 'informative' language in a text such as a business report is full of metaphor that cannot easily be broken down into semantic form without loss to the target text. Following on from this, criticisim of Reiss's divisions in types of language has centred on the fact that all three of Reiss's functions can co-exist within a single text. Despite these criticisms, she helped to move the emphasis in translation from individual words, phrases and sentences to a consideration of the text as an integrated whole, and how that should be communicated.

Along with Reiss, Hans Vermeer proposed the 'Skopos' theory of translation, from the Greek word 'skopos', meaning 'purpose.'[24] In Skopos theory, the purpose of the translation takes precedence over any other consideration, becoming the defining reason for the translation. Two further rules are proposed by Skopos theory, the 'coherence rule' and the 'fidelity rule.' The first concerns target language readers' ability to understand the translation, otherwise the purpose of the translation will not have been fulfilled: the latter states that the source text and the translated text should cohere through the translator's interpretation. Skopos theory places the source language quite a long way down its list of priorities, which Vermeer describes as a 'dethroning' of the source language.

Based on a comparative stylistic analysis of French and English, in 1958, Jean-Paul Vinay and Jean Darbelnet evolved a model, again as a practical reference for translators which comprised two 'strategies' and seven 'procedures'.[25] The strategies were 'direct' translation, or what would have earlier been called literal translation, and 'oblique' translation. Of their seven procedures, three correspond to direct translation – borrowing, calque, and literal translation, and four to oblique translation – transposition, modulation, equivalence and adaptation. They also

[24] See Munday (2012), pp.122-125
[25] *Ibid*, pp.85-92

stressed the importance of what they termed ‘servitude’, compulsory intertextual differences, such as word order, and ‘option’, changes which the translator makes which reflect his or her own interpretation of the text. The latter was considered by Vinay and Darbelnet to be the most important weapon in the translator’s arsenal, to make these stylistic choices to convey atmosphere and nuance. This model seems to incorporate the techniques used by Mac Grianna in literary translation, in particular ‘option’, where his choices can influence and affect the tone of a text.

Polysystem theory stems from the work of the Russian formalists in the 1920s and later Czech structuralists, and their theories of literary historiography and linguistics. These posited that a piece of literature must be seen within a system of literature, and should be studied as such, not as an isolated artefact. Its foremost theorist, Itamar Even-Zohar, contends that literature in translation constitutes part of a system within society, in the decisions that the target language society makes regarding translation choices, and in the influence from other systems within society.[26] He rejects as elitist a hierarchical approach to literature which places popular literature (including translated literature) in a position below that of so-called ‘serious’ literature. Polysystem theory also proposes that translation systems, like other systems within society, are never static but are always struggling against each other in a ‘dynamic process of evolution’. Translated works, therefore, can at times come to the fore and assume primary position within a country’s literature in three ways: when a country is establishing its literature and takes more orthodox literary models from other countries as a basis for its foundation: when a country’s literature is ‘weak’ or ‘peripheral’ and it introduces literature from outside its own culture to support this weakness’(this might occur in the case of a small nation or a minority language): and when a literary void or gap emerges, perhaps in a certain genre of literature, translated works can be used to fill that gap.

The situation of the Irish language within the newly-formed Free State seems to fall neatly within polysystem theory. Scéim Aistriúcháin an Ghúim was developed in the 1920s as a response to the Irish language revival of earlier decades, and aimed to translate a miscellany of literary genres from other languages to provide reading material for speakers and learners of the Irish language. The decline in Irish

[26] *Ibid* pp.165-9

as the majority language in Ireland had continued unabated alongside English colonial rule in Ireland for several centuries, with a concomitant decline in the production of literature in the language. The Gaelic Revival in the early decades of the twentieth century had caused a re-evaluation of the language and had made it a marker of Irish identity. An Gúm's scheme seemed eminently practical, it tied in with similar schemes to promote the teaching of Irish in schools, and attempted to fill a perceived vacuum, all in line with Even-Zohar's three criteria.

From the mid-nineteenth century onwards, Ireland was producing some of the greatest writers of the twentieth century (notably Joyce and Yeats) but in English, which had gradually taken over from Irish as the language of the majority. Literature in English from Ireland had always been among the greatest in the English language, including great writers such as Farquhar, Goldsmith, Sheridan and Swift. The majority of these writers sprang from a wealthy educated Protestant Anglo-Irish Ascendancy class, the colonial ruling class in Irish society. Latterly, writers from a burgeoning Catholic middle class were published, Griffin, for example, in the mid-nineteenth century, as well as Joyce, in the early years of the twentieth.). Such literature stemmed mainly from a small educated elite within both religions, and excluded the vast majority of Irish people, which was comprised of an impoverished peasant class of a monoglot English-speaking majority in the east and north of the country, both Catholic and Protestant, and a mixture of monoglot Irish speakers and bi-lingual Irish and English speakers in the west**.** Carleton is one exception to this general pattern, a Catholic writer, a native Irish speaker from Tyrone who survived the Great Famine. He did, however, convert to Protestantism, and write in English to find a readership for his work.[27]

Famines, particulary those of the 1840s, had more than decimated Ireland's population, through death and emigration, almost exclusively among the working classes, effecting a huge reduction in the number of Irish speakers in Ireland, and returning those who emigrated to anglophone nations such as the United States of America, Canada, Australia and New Zealand where they became one of many minority-language-speaking communities, within an even more overwhelmingly English-speaking context that had ever existed for them in Ireland.

[27] See Chaper 2 of Benedict Kiely's 19467 biography of Carleton *Poor Scholar: a Study of the Works and Days of William Carleton*

This seems to bear out polysystem theory both within translations studies and within general polysystem theory, since An Gúm's translation scheme became the result of many social and economic systems combining to create this unique narrative for the Irish language at the beginning of Irish independence from many centuries of colonial rule.

Postmodern Theory and its Influence on Translation Studies

Striving to achieve interlingual equivalence continued to be regarded as the touchstone of translation in the decades after Nida's and others' practical systematic approach. However, such approaches, which came to be termed 'prescriptive', came under scrutiny and a new 'descriptive' approach to translation became prevalent in the 1990s. Prescriptive approaches, from St Jerome onwards, were called into question, particularly with regard to the subjectivity and vagueness of terms such as 'free' and 'literal', and the circular nature and ultimate unachievability of true interlingual equivalence.

Polysystem theory was developed and expanded by Gideon Toury to incorporate a more descriptive form of translation, creating a methodology which includes expanding the range of the target language to include the target language culture and locating the translation within this culture.[28] The source text should undergo a textual analysis to identify correspondences within the two texts which he called 'coupled pairs'. Generalisations should also be made about the source and translated texts to provide a process of reconstruction for the texts. This process should be replicated to construct a descriptive outline which includes time-period, genre, literary or otherwise, and writer. Norms can then be established within different translation types. Thus descriptive translation studies are built up and laws governing the general function of translation can be developed.

Toury's idea of 'norms' within translation is that of the provision of building blocks from which general laws governing translation and the translator's modus operandi can be extrapolated. They are the learned acceptable social behaviours by which a culture defines itself. They fall somewhere between rules and what Toury terms 'idiosyncrasies'. Since norms are a version of 'rules' in any particular culture,

[28] See Munday, (2012) pp.169-171

albeit a less formal, less dogmatic version, there is still a strong element of prescriptivism surrounding them, which weakens the overall hypothesis. A very 'free' form of translation would violate these norms and ironically create a prescriptive tendency within translation.

Toury also provides a method for discovering the norms contained within a translation. He advocates examining the text for correlations between source and target text segments which will elucidate the translator's thought processes, and reveal the norms which pertain to that translation. He also takes into consideration the translator's thoughts on his processes (such as in prefaces and introductions to translated works), even though these may not prove a reliable source of information regarding norms.

There are three types of norms which can be present within a translation, initial norms, preliminary norms and operational norms. The initial norm refers to the choice made by translators in favour of either the source text or the target language. If the source text is chosen, the translation is described as 'adequate', if the target language norms are chosen, the translation is described as 'acceptable'. 'Adequacy' and 'acceptability' are extremes of a continuum so translations will never be entirely one or the other. Preliminary norms refer to translation policy (socio-cultural elements) while operational norms comprise matricial norms (textual completeness, omissions and relocations of text for example).

Polysystem theory, with its emphasis on the socio-cultural systems which impinge upon and influence the decisions made by translators, paved the way for what has been dubbed 'the Cultural Turn' (Snell-Hornby,1990) in translation theory. Susan Basnett and André Lefevre 1990's collection *Translation History and Culture* swept away all that went before with regard to systemising translation theory, on the grounds that close textual comparisons at the level of lexis and syntax are of no value as they do not examine the translation within the context of the culture which produced it. This cultural context includes looking at translation in the light of the historiography of translation over time, and ideologies such as feminism, Marxism, and post-colonialism, and translation as re-writing, including film and television adaptations.

Lefevere's work on translation theory was key in developing the 'cultural turn' in translation theory. He examines the power positions of those involved in the production and writing of literature and the political and ideological agendas at work through them. These are the people who control the production and consumption of literature, and, to use Lefevere's term, are engaged in 'rewriting' literature. Translation constitutes the clearest example of this process of rewriting since it transposes the literature of one culture through a distorting prism of the receiving culture. He uses the case of Edward Fitzgerald, the son of wealthy Anglo-Irish parents of Norman descent, whose translation of the *Rubayait* of Omar Khayhám in the nineteenth century reflects the colonial prism through which he presented what he perceived to be a foreign and inferior culture, that of eleventh-century Persia. Fitzgerald felt entitled to produce a very free translation in order to improve, as he saw it, the original poetry. His translation followed the accepted poetic forms of his time, indeed, what could be termed literary 'norms' of his time and became a sensational success.

Charlotte Brooke, in *Reliques of Irish Poetry* (1789) achieved the same literary and commercial success, and used the same translation techniques as Fitzgerald, but with very different objectives. She wished to confer status upon the Irish language, to legitimise it and, in her view, elevate it to its rightful place in the pantheon of other languages of antiquity such as Greek and Latin. Translation of the language meant a translation of the culture to illuminate the similarities of both for the receptor audience, thus engendering acceptance of one by the other. These two opposing motivations for translation both emanate from a colonial perspective, but the translation which results from them is cut from the same cloth: it must pander to the needs of the coloniser's culture by adopting its modes and idioms – its 'norms'.

Lefevere's theory of rewriting, in all aspects of written output, is perhaps most obvious in the process of translation and in his estimation, translation is 'potentially the most influential (type of rewriting), because it is able to project the image of an author and/or those works beyond the boundaries of their culture of origin' (Lefevere 1992 p9). Translation is governed by professionals from within and patronage from without. Professionals within the system such as critics, reviewers, as well as translators themselves control the dominant 'poetics'or current literary preferences. Patronage outside the system consists of any person or group with the power to

enable or disable the current flow of literature. Patrons could be (historically) powerful individuals such as monarchs, or, in contemporary life, groups such as publishing houses or political parties, or institutions such as universities.

Patronage comprises three components, ideology, economics and status. The ideological component is the focus of patronage, and has a wide definition. It is not restricted simply to political ideologies, but encompasses social forms, beliefs and conventions. The economic component refers to payment of translators, such as fees and royalties, paid by patrons such as the Government or publishers. The status component is multi-dimensional, perhaps showing the translator's compliance with the patron in return for payment.

If the same group or individual is the provider of all three components, then the patronage is considered to be 'undifferentiated'. In Ireland all translation has been based on a process of patronage from earliest times. Patronage was an inherent feature of early Irish society, poets relying on the patronage of Gaelic lords and the Church. In the twentieth century, An Gúm's translation scheme provides us with a more modern example of state patronage, where the state acts as ideological initiator of the scheme to provide reading material for Irish language speakers.

If the three components do not depend on each other, then patronage is described as undifferentiated. Status may not be given to authors of popular literature by the literary establishment, for example, although the economic rewards may be great.

Within dominant poetics, Lefevere identifies two strands: literary devices such as narrative and plot, which can become formal conventions, and the concept of the role of literature within society. This is a development of poly-system theory, where different literatures compete for supremacy within society. Lefevere expands this idea to include the creation of a classic literary canon by universities which changes according to the fluctuations within the dominant poetics, which are in turn influenced by the dominant ideology. For Lefevere, this canon has often reflected a Western colonial bias which has overlooked and ignored cultures outside the dominant ideology.

Post-colonial Translation Theory

The theories posited by Basnett and Lefevere helped form the background to the expansion of translation theory into different philosophical ideologies, including feminism for example, but post-colonial theory has perhaps had the biggest impact upon translation theory and is of particular relevance to the history of translation in the Irish language.

Post-colonial translation theory has often been concerned with global colonialism throughout history by major European powers in countries where western Christian hegemony did not yet exist. The study of post-colonialism seems particularly suited to the study of translation, mirroring as it does, in the demands of source and target languages, the duality of power relationships and the polarisation of cultures into majority and minority, master and servant, ruler and ruled, superior and inferior. As with Levefere's theory of translation as re-writing, the colonising culture tends to resculpt the colonised culture in its own image. Charlotte Brooke uses the image of 'clothing the thoughts of the muse', with language, which implies dressing the culture up in an unfamiliar and unnatural garb, but also of covering up, of hiding or obscuring the culture from view, of muffling or silencing its voice.[29]

The colony has its culture translated into an inferior version of the coloniser's culture, then reflected back to the colonising culture as the definitive version of the colony**.** Thus words such as 'the Orient', 'Indian', 'Latino', 'the Native Irish', reflect the coloniser's translated viewpoint, and create an accepted global stereotype, overriding and deleting the pre-existing culture. The history of global colonisation is also the story of the linguistic colonisation of the world, often under the hegemony of the English language, as well as the languages of other western colonisers such as French, German, Spanish and Dutch. Although English is not the global language that possesses the most native speakers, it is arguably the language with the greatest cultural power. In recent years, certainly in the years following the First World War, this influence has been manifested in the establishment of the United States of America as the most powerful country, politically and economically, in the world. However, dominance of culture through its media entertainment industry, notably the Hollywood film industry and major global television networks such as Fox

[29] Brooke,(1789) pp. vi-vii

and CNN, and in the past thirty years, the creation of the internet and the explosion of technology such as Facebook, Twitter and Google, emanating from the USA, has made English, and specifically American English, the language of cultural and economic imperative throughout the world.

The most important development for translation into Irish in Ireland in the early years of the twentieth century was the adoption of vernacular spoken Irish in literature, 'caint na ndaoine' as it was dubbed by its most vocal proponent, an t-Athair Peadar Ua Laoghaire. The Gaelic League-inspired revival in interest in the language and the founding of the Irish Free State in 1923 contributed to, what might seem in hindsight, a doomed Utopian vision of the re-instatement of Irish as the spoken language of the majority of the population. In order to optimise the conditions for this anticipated reversal of fortune for the Irish language, newly-created works of literature in Irish were needed to enrich and energise the language after years of decline and impoverishment. A debate raged as to whether this putative new literature should be written in the classical, literary Irish of the seventeenth century or in the modern idiom of native speakers. The suggestion that an older form of the language be utilised to produce modern literature seems strange to modern sensibilities, but the unique position of Irish at that time, as the declining language of a colonised nation, whose literature had last flourished several centuries earlier, led to a belief that the modern language had become 'debased' and that the older language possessed a literary 'purity' absent from its modern form. The use of an older language which possessed a written standard form was also viewed as a possible solution to the jostling for position of different Irish dialects for linguistic supremacy, and to obviate the necessity for an artificially created standard form of the language.[30]

Language relativism decreed that the pernicious influence of English must have infiltrated not only the syntactic structures of modern Irish, but the thought processes that lay behind them. Séamus Ó Grianna, brother of Seosamh, also a writer and a translator for the scheme, seems to endorse this belief and take it one step further down the relativist road in an article entitled 'Aistriú – na Smaointe agus ní hiad na Focail' in *Misneach* in 1921, some years before the Scheme began. He

[30] See O'Leary P (2011) *Writing Beyond the Revival: Facing the Future in Gaelic Prose,* (Dublin, University College Dublin Press), pp 18-26.

claims ‘bíonn a gcuid smaointe féin ag gach dream daoine’ (Ó Grianna in Mac Congáil 2003, p169) and goes on to write:

> Cuid mhór de na daoine atá ag foghlaim na Gaeilge, ní thuigeann siad go fóill go bhfuil duifear ann eadar anam an tSasanaigh agus ceann an Ghaeil – go bhfuil an Sasanach béalachtach, lochtach, bithiúnta, bréagach agus an Gael díreach, ionraice, soineanta.[31] (Ó Grianna in Mac Congáil 2003, pp 169 – 170).

Peadar Ua Laoghaire understood that the language had to move forward to develop and that returning to a form not spoken for centuries would impede its natural progression and development, and, on a practical level, would not be understood by the majority of Irish speakers. He was not however immune to fear of the influence of English on the language and saw translation from English into Irish as a particular threat. His support for ‘caint na ndaoine’ has implications for Irish language translation and particularly for An Gúm’s translation scheme. Its emphasis on the modern vernacular earmarked it as the Irish of translation, as Cronin points out:

> The text would be ‘naturalised ‘in translation, rendered in the idiom of the Gaeltacht. Secondly, those who were most familiar with *caint na ndaoine* were obviously native speakers themselves. Therefore the question of who was translating into Irish became more important. (Cronin, 1996, p.148)

Ua Laoghaire, whom Cronin describes as ‘one of the first writers to self-reflexively analyse the translation process’ (p.149), was wary of translation into Irish in the overwhelmingly Anglophone context of early twentieth century Ireland, and of the increasing anglicisation of the language that might stem from translations made by non-native speakers of the language. In another echo of language determinism, for Ua Laoghaire only the Irish of the Gaeltacht areas could be relied upon to provide a correct and natural translation untainted by an English language mindset. The desire for linguistic purity had a long-lasting and restrictive impact upon the language’s development:

> Instead of allowing the language to evolve through the contribution of translation, the temptation was to put it in quarantine and ignore the impact of English on *caint na ndaoine* in Gaeltacht areas. (Cronin, 1996 p.150)

[31] These opinions are repudiated in an article which appeared in *Misneach* entitled ‘Aistriúchán – Saol Nua i Litríocht na Gaeilge’ see Mac Congáil, 2003, p. 170.

The ‘quarantine’ resulted in a policy that could be described as a benign state policing of the language. Translation followed this relativist route, with strictly target text equivalence its object. The source texts in the Scheme were translated along these lines, and as a result provide a linguistic snapshot of the Irish of that time. The Irish of native speakers from Gaeltacht areas, such as Mac Grianna, is captured and provided with an English equivalent**.**

Philosophical Approaches to Translation

George Steiner’s highly influential book *After Babel* (1975) is a key work behind the construction of a philosopical theory of the act of translation. The initial inspiration for his philosophy was Schleiemacher’s hermeneutics, his model, a ‘totalising’ model, as he terms it, has its roots in Jakobson’s three types of translation, intralingual, interlingual and intersemiotic. A third influence is Chomsky’s generative-transformative grammar, which Steiner uses to try to form a universal theory of translation. This last can make the book seem dated, but it is a product of its time, and was hugely influential in developing translation theory. Steiner sees translation as an art rather than a science, albeit ‘an exact art’. There are four moves within the hermeneutic motion, initiative trust, aggression, incorporation and compensation.

The translator must first of all display trust in the text, that the text is in itself has value and will justify the translator’s effort in translating it. An example of this is Mac Grianna’s translations of Conrad. Conrad is the only author who has had more than one of his works translated by Mac Grianna within An Gum’s scheme, and there is evidence in An Gum’s files that ‘Lord Jim’ was also considered for translation.[32] Evidence from these files indicates that Mac Grianna admired Conrad.[33] Conrad’s influence on Mac Grianna’s own writing has been examined by Liam Ó Dochartaigh (1981), who draws parallels with the Conrad character Marlow and the protagonist of *Mo Bhealach Féin.*

Steiner’s second move, that of ‘aggression’ has been criticised by feminist writers for its use of the vocabulary of male violence, (he describes the act of

[32] [32] See National Archives/GAEL/AN GUM/A0106
[33] *Ibid*

translation as 'penetration', for example.)[34] He depicts translation as an act of aggression towards the source text by the translator, using the metaphor of the translator as an open-cast miner extracting meaning from the source text, leaving the source text depleted and scarred:

> 'The translator invades, extracts, and brings home. The simile is that of an open-cast mine left an empty scar in the landscape' (Steiner, (1975) p.298)

This meaning is then, in the third movement, incorporated into the target language, somewhere between the two extremes of 'complete domestication' and 'permanent strangeness'.

Derrida and Deconstruction

Since translation is necessarily interdisciplinary, because it involves an act of linguistic and cultural interpretation at the most basic and profound level, theorists from other disciplines have sought to examine it and incorporate its complexities and paradoxes into theoretical paradigms. The deconstructionist take on translation begins with a rejection of linguistic theories such as those of Saussure and Chomsky. It questions the premise of language itself as a fixed and definable concept, and the perceived rules and assumptions that pertain to structures such as grammar and linguistics. Meaning is no longer fixed but shifting, not just diachronically as language changes over time, but synchronically, where language and meaning in the present are constantly displaced and in a state of fluctuation. Jacques Derrida uses the French verb 'différer' with its two meanings of 'differ' and 'defer' and shades of meaning and illusion in between the two to illustrate this fluidity**.** Derrida demonstrates the basically unstable nature of language itself as he illustrates his thesis by allowing fixed meaning to unravel, revealing language as an unreliable narrator of experience.

Arising from this decontructionist approach, a theory of 'abusive fidelity' to the source text was propounded by Philip E. Lewis (1985/2004). In comparing French and English translations, he sees translations into the English language containing 'fuller, more cohesive delineations' and a level of conformity to 'use-values', which should be challenged. 'Abuse' is present in the source text, and should be sought in the translation:

[34] See Munday, (2012) pp.250

> To accredit the use-values is inevitably to opt for what domesticates or familiarises a message at the expense of whatever might upset or force or abuse language and thought, might seek after the unthought or the unthinkable in the unsaid or the unsayable (Lewis in Venuti p 235)

Lewis returns here to the idea of domestication but he rejects this loss to the source text and requires the target text to take on lexical and syntactic characteristics from the source text, energising both source and target text as a result. Lewis is a translator for Derrida's work and his theory is particularly appropriate for the translation of such dense philosophical expression in which language itself is pulled apart and plundered for meaning, context and allusion.

The Role of the Translator

In recent years the role of the translator has been brought to the fore. Laurence Venuti, in particular, has drawn attention to what he describes as the 'invisibility' of the translator. For him, describing his own experience as a translator, the role is generally down-played and indeed, often completely overlooked. The translator may be reduced to a marginal mention, or completely excluded from any publicity surrounding the translated work. Reviewers often discuss the translation as if it were the original, even attributing elements of style and particular vocabulary in the target language to the original author even though the translator has chosen it.

In earlier times the translator was much more 'visible': Bible translators risked their lives to translate sacred texts, and a writer such as Dryden, an established and popular playwright and poet, risked his reputation translating classic Greek and Roman authors. John Keats was inspired by the work of an earlier translator to write his famous poem 'On looking into Chapman's Homer' and, as we have seen, Matthew Arnold took Francis Newman publicly to task for perceived deficiencies in the latter's translation of Homer. Fitzgerald and Brooke became equally as famous as translators as any creative writer of their time.

Venuti's 'invisibility' theory can be attributed in some part to the business of translation within the publishing industry in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. As this business increased to include translations of classic novels and contemporary literature from European countries, the role of the translator was

diminished, as the marketing of a text by publishing houses usually centred on exploiting the fame of the author of the source text, in order to increase sales.

This is not entirely reflected in the experience of Seosamh Mac Grianna as a translator. Like Fitzgerald and Brooke, Mac Grianna enjoyed a level of 'visibility' as one of An Gúm's published authors of creative literature in Irish. His fame as a creative writer in his own right was used by An Gúm in its publicity for his translation work and his name was prominently displayed on the title page of the novels as translator alongside that of the original author. This fame to Irish speakers often outweighed that of the writers he translated, with the exception, perhaps, of Conrad. However, the English- and Irish-language bi-lingualism of the majority of his readership must be a predominant reason for promoting his translation work in this way. The audience for An Gúm's translated texts would often have been familiar with many of the source texts, in their original form, in the case of English-language texts, and in an English translation, in the case of works translated from other European languages, such as Russian. They may also have been familiar with some works through cinema adaptation (on Jakobson's 'intersemiotic' level.). These were, at the time, considered to be points in favour of the scheme's policy of providing a wide range of reading material which catered for Irish speakers and learners alike. The chance to read a translation into Irish by a writer of proven linguistic and creative ability such as Mac Grianna would have been added selling point for the texts.

Corpus Linguistics

As technology around the storage of text has expanded exponentially in recent years, so have the possibilities for the study of translation through the quantitative data which can be extracted through corpora of texts which have been processed electronically. This can provide, by means of collocations for example, quantitative comparable linguistic data, giving insights into syntactic and lexical patterns within language. Electronic processing can deal with much greater quantities of data than can be compiled by human researchers and provide evidence for the patterns within language about which researchers could hitherto only make rough estimations.

Tobar na Gaedhilge is one such text-based piece of analytic software, a collection of parallel corpora, containing many works by Irish authors including Mac Grianna and his translation work for An Gúm. French translations of the works by Conrad are also available on Tobar na Gaedhilge. These provide a three-way method of inter-textual and inter-lingual comparison as well as evidence of translation method and strategy employed by Mac Grianna. It can provide quantitative research methods, statistics for word frequency, for example, as well as qualitative research methods, such as examination of concordance lines. This lends itself to contrastive analysis of the texts.

Conclusion

Translation theory at the turn of the twenty-first century has expanded in breadth and scope hugely, incorporating studies in linguistics at the level of lexis and syntax as well as being scrutinised by contemporary poststructural theory and related theories such as post-colonialism and deconstructivism. The difficulties of translation have caused its practictioners to comment upon it from earliest times and to attempt to devise an all-encompassing theory and methodology which could be applied to the many and various problems that stemmed from it. Translators of classical antiquity and early Christianity grappled with ‘word for word’ and ‘sense for sense’ translations of Greek and Roman authors, as well as sacred Christian texts, polarities which morphed into related concepts of ‘literal’ and ‘free’ translation. These concepts continued to inform the debate until the nineteenth century.

Irish texts in the early Christian period reveal an unashamedly ‘domesticating’ approach to literary translation, encased within the wider European context, rather than the Irish/ British, Irish language/ English language contraposition which dominated the debate after this era. The increasing domination of the English language in Ireland and the decline of Irish led, in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, to the championing of early Gaelic literature by the Anglo-Irish Ascendancy class, and to very popular translations into English, both ‘free’ and more ‘literal’ versions.

Theories of hermeneutics emerged in the nineteenth century in Germany, influenced by linguistic relativism. Schleiemacher’s categorisation of the translator

into literary and non-literary types gave recognition to the translator's creative input into literary texts. He also highlighted the needs of the reader of the target text and the effect that a target text should have on the reader. In Ireland in the early years of the twentieth century, language revival and political independence from British rule led to the formation of An Gúm, a scheme for promoting the Irish language through the provision of, among other materials, translated texts from classic and popular world literature, in order to meet the requirements of an anticipated increase in Irish language usage in the new Irish Free State. Seosamh Mac Grianna's translations of Joseph Conrad form part of this translation scheme. The scheme's translation method was predicated on the use of 'caint na ndaoine', the Irish spoken by native speakers in the Gaeltacht areas on the west coast of Ireland with the aim of preserving and developing the spoken language of the time.

In the middle years of the twentieth century, developments in linguistic theory were instrumental in inspiring a more formal and theoretical response to translation, and in attempting to develop a methodology for translation that would cover all contingenceis within the discipline. Saussure and Chomsky's linguistic theories inspired Jakobson and Nida, and, in a more philosophical vein, Steiner's theory of hermeneutic motion. Equivalence was the holy grail of this aspect of translation theory, and Nida's division of 'formal' and 'dynamic' equivalence was particularly influential.

The end of the twentieth century saw postmodern theory such as deconstructivism exert an arguably greater influence on translation studies than any of the previous linguistically-based theories and methodologies. Translation is central to postmodern theories such as post-colonialism. Inter-lingual translation lies at the heart of the unequal relationship between coloniser and colonised. Post-colonial theory is of course supremely relevant to Ireland as a colonised country and to the Irish language as a colonised language. The power relationship between the two countries is reflected in the fortunes of the two languages.

At the end of the twentieth century, some postmodern theorists were dismissive of earlier linguistics-based theories of translation, as having too limited a focus. For them, studies at a linguistic level did not provide a wider contextual framework within which to place the translation. However, developments in

computer software now provide computational techniques which allow analysis of much greater quantities of text, through concordances and frequencies of individual words. This allows quantitative as well as qualitative research at the lexical and syntactic level, which can then support the wider theoretical contrastive analysis between languages. Through this combination of method with theory, research in the multi-disciplinary field of translation theory can now be carried out at both a linguistic and theoretic level.

Contemporary Commentators – Ua Laoghaire and Ó Nualláin

Introduction – Ua Laoghaire's influence on Translation

> It may be laid down as a general rule that, such is the innate antagonism between the two languages in every phrase, that so surely as a word is used figuratively in one it is certain to be taken literally in the other, and to express outrageous nonsense. (*Papers on the Irish Idiom,* 1926, p.89)

The quotation above from an tAthair Peadar Ua Laoghaire illustrates the peculiarly Irish take on the international and ancient vexed question of translating from one language into another, a question that has been particularly relevant in the case of the Irish language, in the light of centuries of colonisation and the imposition of the English language, and one that came to the fore during the revival of interest in the language in the early years of the twentieth century. Ua Laoghaire's re-working of the folklore tale *Séadhna* (1904), written in the style which he dubbed 'caint na ndaoine', had far-reaching consequences for the perception of what constituted 'good' and 'bad' Irish and his emphasis on the spoken word as the standard form of the language, with a rejection of an earlier, more formal written standard, formed the basis of translation method in the language which persists today. Ua Laoghaire therefore became one of the most influential voices regarding English language translation into Irish, during the time that Mac Grianna was working for Scéim Aistriúcháin an Ghúm, Ua Laoghaire's work *Papers on the Irish Idiom* (1929) is quoted in An Gúm's *Treoracha d'Aistritheoirí*[35], providing a template for translation that may influence much translation today.

> Phléigh an Canónach Peadar Ua Laoghaire cuid de na fadhbanna seo os cionn céad bliain ó shin in aiste a foilsíodh sa leabhar *Papers on Irish Idiom by the late Canon Peter O'Leary, PP* (1929). Féach, go háirithe, an méid seo ar leathanach 90:
>
> The translator must first find out the *sense* of what he wishes to translate. Then he must turn his back completely upon the English *words*, think the thoughts out as they might be thought out in Irish, and then express the thoughts in Irish exactly as he would express them if they were his own thoughts and he knew no language but Irish.

[35] http/www/forasnagaeilge.ie/wpcontent/uploads/2016/06/Treoracha-dAistritheoiri.pdf

Ua Laoghaire here, no doubt unconsciously, echoes Nida's 'equivalent effect'– that the translation should have the same effect upon its reader's mind that the original does upon a reader in the original language. Nida's dictum is, in this case, complicated by the bi-lingualism of Irish society and a prevailing suspicion of the encroachment of the English language upon Irish. This suspicion, on Ua Laoghaire's part, culminated in distrust of non-native speakers' ability satisfactorily to translate from English to Irish without bringing an English-language influence to bear upon Irish translation, as Cronin points out when discussing Ua Laoghaire's attitude towards translations:

> Translators whose mother tongue was not Irish ran the risk of producing texts that were syntactically and idiomatically beholden to English. Hence the ambivalence towards translation that has been a feature of writing and criticism in Irish from the late nineteenth century onward. (1999, p.49)

An Gúm's translation guidelines include the following points for translators to consider:

> (a) Ní cóir iarracht a dhéanamh Béarla (nó teanga ar bith eile) a aistriú focal ar fhocal go Gaeilge. Is iad na smaointe atá tábhachtach – ní hiad na focail. Ba chóir don aistritheoir an dá cheist a chur air/uirthi féin: (i) cad é díreach an smaoineamh atá an t-údar ag iarraidh a chur in iúl, agus (ii) conas a chuirfeadh scríbhneoir Gaeilge an smaoineamh sin in iúl.
>
> (b) Tá an Béarla (scríofa) an-tugtha d'abairtí fada casta – clásail agus fochlásail ag sileadh as a chéile. Nuair a dhéantar iarracht aithris a dhéanamh ar abairt mar sin i nGaeilge, is minic a bhíonn an toradh dothuigthe, ar an gcéad léamh ach go háirithe. Ba chóir a leithéid d'abairt a bhriseadh agus dhá nó trí abairt ghearra a scríobh ina áit.
>
> (c) Tá an Béarla (scríofa) an-tugtha don teibíocht, fiú nuair ab fhearr go mór focail nithiúla sa Bhéarla féin. Ba chóir don aistritheoir focail theibí mar sin a sheachaint chomh mór agus is féidir leis. Mhol Ernest Gowers (údar *The Complete Plain Words*) do scríbhneoirí an Bhéarla féin iad a sheachaint.

Ernest Gowers does indeed make such a recommendation when describing the best method for a civil servant to write an official letter.[36] An Gúm's guidelines are also aimed at the translator of official documents, but at the time when Mac Grianna was translating creative works such as Conrad's, these sorts of recommendations were the accepted prescriptions for translating from English to Irish in general.

[36] 1954, p.31

These three core recommendations are at the heart of the philosophy of translation that can be gleaned from the work of An tAthair Peadar Ua Laoghaire and An tAthair Gearóid Ó Nualláin, Ua Laoghaire's disciple, collaborator and correspondent**.** Mac Grianna's work in translating Conrad reflects these guidelines, and Ó Nualláin's more detailed principles. They are useful for non-literary translation work, but they may not be helpful for literary translation, where not only the thoughts, ('smaointe',) are important, but also the choice of language used in the expression of those thoughts, since this is the key to the author's style. Ua Laoghaire's exhortation to re-think the thoughts of the source text does not take into consideration the difficulties of approximating style in translation from creative texts. Ua Laoghaire demonstrates that Nida's goal of 'equivalent effect' seems to require that emphasis is placed upon the target language, perhaps at the expense of the original author's intentions, or at the expense of the original language itself.

It is clear from An Gúm's guidelines that modern Irish translation remains very much under the influence of Peadar Ua Laoghaire's thinking regarding the differences between the Irish and English languages. The third point, regarding the tendency to abstraction in the English language, echoes Ua Laoghaire's thoughts below, from his autobiography, *Mo Sgéal Féin* (1915) on the precision of thought in Irish in comparison to the slackness of English, which, according to him, is falling apart linguistically.

> Sar ar fhágas-sa Lios Caragáin níor airigheas riamh amach a' béal duine na h-abartha so, .i. 'Tá mé'; 'bhí mé'; 'bhí siad.' D'airighinn i gcómhnuighe 'Táim'; 'bhíos'; 'bhíodar,' etc. Neithe beaga iseadh iad san, ach is neithe beaga iad a thagan isteach go mion minic sa chaint. Agus is slacht ar an gcaint an módh dlúithte seachas an módh sgurtha. Ar an gcuma gcéadna, is neamhshlacht ar an gcaint an módh sgurtha seachas an módh dlúithte. D'á éaghmuis sin bíon sa chaint dhlúithte neart agus fuinneamh nách féidir a bheith sa chaint a bhíon ag tuitim as a chéile...Tá bárr á thabhairt do'n mhódh sgurtha sa Ghaeluinn, agus módh sgurtha ar fad iseadh an Béarla. Tá an Béarla tuitithe as a chéile ar fad. (1915, p.31)

Ua Laoghaire's example of 'slacht ar an gcaint' is the use of the 'modh dlúithe' (synthetic form) and the 'modh sgurtha' (analytic form). This refers to a characteristic of Munster Irish, preserved in the language from earlier forms of Irish, in which the verb form expresses both verb and person**,** a linguistic trait that can also

be found in Latin and in Romance languages such as Spanish. [37] This is unlike Irish usage in other Gaeltacht areas where the analytic form is used for the most part, in which the first person is demonstrated by the first person pronoun. The analytic form is also used in the English language. Ua Laoghaire is engaged in stressing difference from the English language at all times. Use of the synthetic form in the first person singular of verbs, which is preserved in Munster Irish, and not in other dialects of the language, gives the Irish language a point of comparison with languages of classical antiquity such as Latin and Greek and disassociates it from English, contributing to Ua Laoghaire's linguistic nationalism, and his desire to highlight linguistic difference, in order to compound the notion of difference from the coloniser, in all aspects of Irish life.

An tAthair Gearóid Ó Nualláin, a friend and colleague of Ua Laoghaire's corresponded with him concerning points of Irish grammar. In his autobiography, *Beatha Duine a Thoil* (1950) he describes Ua Laoighaire's attitude towards translation thus:

> Tá daoine ann, agus déarfaidís, b'fhéidir, go raibh an tAthair Peadar ana cheanndána i dtaobh na Gaoluinne, agus go gcaithfeadh sé a shlighe féin a bheith aige i gcómhnuidhe. Ní fíor san in aon chóir. Is minic a ghéilleadh sé dhom nuair a chomhairlighinn dó focal éigin a bhí san aistriúchan aige d'athrú agus focal éigin eile chur ann 'na ionad. Do chuireas an t-aistriúcháin i gcomparáid, ní hamháin leis an Laidin agus leis an nGréigis, ach le haistriúcháin Frainncise a dhein l'Abbé Crampon, (1950, p.131)

Ó Nualláin here paints a picture of someone with strong views but with the breadth of linguistic expertise to support them. He also illustrates his attitude to bureaucratic surveillance:

> Bhí daoine áirithe ann agus nuair airigheadar go raibh an Bíobla 'a aistriú go Gaoluinn ag an Athair Peadar, ba mhian leo go gcuirfí 'Coimisiún' ar bun chum aire thabhairt do'n obair. Níor thaithin san leis an Athair Peadar i n-aon chor. (1950, p.130)

Ua Laoghaire expresses his views to Ó Nualláin in a letter:

> I got a letter from the Bishop of Cloyne, telling about the 'Commission'. Of course I knew what that would mean. So I wrote back and said:- the 'Nihil Obstat' of Father O'Nolan, and the 'Imprimatur' of the Archbishop of Dublin, are good enough for any book. So now there will be no further delay.

[37] See O'Rahilly, (1932) p.219.

> P.S. – It is very easy to see…what we should expect from a 'Committee of Experts,' as you say. The very moment I saw the suggestion I made up my mind to have nothing to do with it.' (*Beatha Duine a Thoil* 1950, p.130)

Ua Laoghaire certainly seems bullishly confident in his ability and in his own status as an 'expert' in the language, although Ó Nualláin does point out one instance, at least, where he found that Ua Laoghaire's linguistic expertise was somewhat lacking. In discussing Ua Laoghaire's opinions of the use of 'dá mba' and 'dá mb'é', he points out that Ua Laoghaire seems unaware of their connection to the use of indefinite and definite nouns:

> That expression 'dá mba leath mo righeachta é' is constantly heard in Irish conversation:…'dá mba fiche punt é' But - 'dá mb'é an fiche punt san ad' phóca agat é'. If I were to be writing Irish for ever, I would never put in the second (i.e. the first) 'é'… (1950, p.142)

and concludes: 'Dheallrochadh an scéal nár thuig an tAthair Peadar an puinnte go cruinn.' (1950, p.143)

Forgive and Forget – Ua Laoghaire's Translation Methods

In *Papers on Irish Idiom* (1926), Ua Laoghaire discusses specifically an example of metaphorical language given a literal translation and provides his own example of how this might be translated from English. It concerns a story by Maria Edgeworth entitled *Forgive and Forget*, which had been translated in the eighteen thirties, during her lifetime, by Tómás Ó Fiannachta.[38] Ó Fiannachta translates the title as *Maith agus Dearmhad*, which for Ua Laoghaire is a literal translation that is meaningless in Irish:

> I first saw those words, and before I saw the English of which they purported to be a translation, I could not even imagine what they were intended to mean. 'A good and a mistake' is what they conveyed to my mind. By no amount of guessing could I get any further. It follows, of course, that they are not a translation of the motto. (1922, p89)

Ua Laoghaire continues with a summation of his methodology when translating, as well as a considered analysis of what he perceives to be Ó Fiannachta's failure, making an interesting and valid point regarding the different lexical range of the word 'dearmad' in Irish and the word 'forget' in Irish.

[38] Two stories by Edgeworth, *Rosanna* and *Forgive and Forget*, were translated by Ó Fiannachta, an Irish scholar from Munster who taught Irish in Belfast, and worked with Samuel Ferguson – see https://www.ainm.ie/Bio./25/09/18.

> I imagine I hear someone saying, 'Well, then, and how would you do it?' I would first ascertain the true meaning of the English phrase. What does the word 'forget' mean in this phrase? Does it mean that something is to slip from my memory? Not at all. It means that I must not harbour a spirit of revenge. Now the Irish word *dearmhad* can never mean that. It means an *involuntary* mistake of some sort. The 'forget' here is a positive act of will. *Dearmhad* is necessarily against the will. Hence the word *dearmhad* cannot possibly be used in the translation of the motto. (1922, p. 89)

The semantic difference between the two words is fundamental, according to Ua Laoghaire, the English referring to a deliberate, conscious act of volition, and the Irish to an act that is unintentional, a slip or an error, about which a conscious decision cannot be made. It is indeed the concept of 'forgetting' rather than 'forgiving' that is the more problematic of the two concepts to translate into Irish. However, Ua Laoghaire does not take into consideration the fact that Irish distinguishes between conscious and accidental forms of forgetting by using a different preposition to indicate each: to forget by accident uses the preposition 'de' (of) and to make a conscious decision to forget is indicated by the use of the preposition 'ar' (on).[39] So, for example, 'I forgot the key' would translate as 'Rinne mé dearmad den eochair' where the key has been left behind by mistake (in fact, the sentence could arguably be translated as 'I left the key behind'). In a context such as 'I forgot the old life and started anew', the conscious decision to forget would be indicated the the use of the preposition 'ar' – 'Rinne mé dearmad ar an sean-saol, agus thosaigh mé arís', for example. *FGB* (1977) makes this distinction clear:

> dearmad1, m. (gs. & npl. -aid, gpl. ~).1. vn. of dearmad2. 2. Forgetfulness, negligence. ~ a dhéanamh ar dhuine, ar rud, to forget about s.o., sth. Duine, rud, a ligean ar ~, i n~, chun dearmaid, to let s.o., sth., be forgotten, slip into oblivion. Rinne mé ~ de mo hata, I forgot (to take) my hat.

Translated examples from *Tobar na Gaedhlige* include examples fom Mac Grianna such as the following.

> Acht, mar ghní an tsláinte dearmad ar an tinneas atá thart, bhisigh Arras ina dhiaidh sin, agus thabhuigh sí cáil ar fud na ríoghachtaí.(*Eoghan Ruadh Ó Néill*, p.18)

> 'An dtearn tú dearmad ar lá dhubh Ghleann Seisge?' ars' an t-Ab leis. (*Pádraic Ó Conaire agus Aistí Eile*, p.245)

[39] See *FGB*, (1977) p.385

> ‘Rinne mé dearmad ar Shéamus Mhac Domhnaill,’ ar seisean. (*Pádraic Ó Conaire agus Aistí Eile*, p.245)
>
> ‘It is Pimpernel Fair to-morrow,’ I say, suggestively, hoping by a change of subject to divert Jack’s thoughts from my delinquencies, upon which I am certain they are running, (*Comin’ thro’ the Rye,* p.28)
>
> ‘An amárach lá Aonaigh an Phompalláin?’ arsa mise, ag iarraidh cor a chur sa chómhrádh, mar ndúil is go ndeánfadh Seán dearmad ar mo chuid neamhdhiong-mháltachta: ná bhí mé cinnte gur ar sin a bhí sé ag smaointiughadh. (*Ag Teacht fríd an tSeagal*, p.37)

That said, a search on *Tobar na Gaedhilge* on reveals a significantly larger usage by Mac Grianna of the preposition *de* rather than *ar*[40] and he often uses *de* where we would expect *ar.* It seems from his usage of the word in *Tobar na Gaedhilge* that the two prepositions can be used interchangeably with *de* perhaps taking precedence over *ar* in some cases. Generally, the word dearmad, using either preposition, covers the same semantic range as it does in English, as well as the added meaning, mentioned by Ua Laoghaire, of a mistake or an omission. So, even without the preposition usage as a guide, *dearmad* is very much used to express a conscious forgetting, by an effort of will, in spite of Ua Laoghaire’s protestations. There are even examples of Mac Grianna’s very similar translation of ‘forgive and forget’ in *Dith Chéille Almayer*:

> ‘only one idea remained clear and definite — not to forgive her; only one vivid desire— to forget her.’ (*AlF*, p.124)
>
> ‘ní rabh ach rud amháin cinnte i n-a cheann, agus ba é an rud é gan maitheamhnas a thabhairt daoithe, agus dearmad a dhéanamh díthe’. (*DCA*, p.263)
>
> ‘une unique idée restait claire et catégorique — ne pas lui pardonner; un seul désir fulgurant — l’oublier.’ (*FA*, p.165)

as well as the following:

> ‘I will never forgive you, Nina; and to-morrow I shall forget you!’ (*AlF*, p.23)
>
> ‘Ní thabharfaidh mé maitheamhnas go deó duit, a Nina; agus dhéanfaidh mé dearmad i mbárach díot!’ (*DCA*, p.263)
>
> ‘Je ne te pardonnerai jamais, Nina; et demain je t’oublierai!’ (*FA*, p.165)

[40] 201 usages of *de* after *dearmad* and 13 usages of *ar* after *dearmad*

It is clear from these examples that Mac Grianna, at least, did not share Ua Laoghaire's judgement with regard to a literal translation of this phrase, and did not expect any confusion to be caused by the semantic range of the word: for him within the English language concept of 'forgive and forget', a direct translation into Irish seems to be both acceptable and comprehensible to native speakers. It might be an example of idiomatic one-way traffic, from English into Irish, caused by the powerful position, economically and culturally, of the English language in Ireland, where, as bi-lingualism in the Gaeltacht population increases, borrowing from English idiom and recasting it in Irish becomes more common. Mac Grianna is much younger than Ua Laoghaire and comes from a time when bi-lingualism in Gaeltacht areas is becoming more common.

It might also be the case that the combining of the two concepts to create a single unit in English is peculiar to the English language. This would help to explain the fact that Ua Laoghaire chooses to disregard this element, that of 'forgetting', in his eventual translation. He does, however, also disregard the concept of 'forgiving' in his search for the 'true meaning of the English phrase'.

> Having settled that point, I next try to find out whether there is in the Irish language a *set phrase* which is used for the purpose of expressing the same thought which is expressed in English by the phrase, 'Forgive and Forget'. I find there are several. Reading through the little story of which the English motto is prefixed, I find that the lesson inculcated is not so much a lesson of forgiveness as one of forbearance, the Irish phrase whice is commonly used for that purpose is, *Is breá í an fhoidhnne*, 'Patience is a fine thing.' That is, therefore, the true Irish equivalent of 'Forgive and Forget' in this particular place. (1926, p.90)

It is, of course, a matter of debate as to whether he has 'settled that point', but it brings him to his search for 'a *set phrase*', an established idiom in Irish which will provide an equivalent to the English. He reads the story again and interprets the overriding theme as that of forbearance, rather than forgiveness. This is a very personal interpretation and not one that everyone who reads the story might make. Forgiveness is a strongly sign-posted theme in the story, whereas forbearance is, perhaps, more accurately (in this case) a characteristic displayed by the character of Muiris, rather than a 'lesson' of the story. Ua Laoghaire's musings here clearly show us the personal and interpretive nature of translation**.**

'Forgive and forget', therefore, both as a concept, and as individual words, or lexical objects, is, perhaps surprisingly, tricky to translate into Irish without falling back on a word-for-word translation. The individual English words are both verbs in the imperative form. The concepts of 'forgiveness' and 'forgetting' in Irish, although both words exist as verbal forms,[41] tend to be expressed more commonly as abstract nouns in conjunction with other verbal and prepositional structures such as 'dearmad a dhéanamh' or 'ligean i ndearmad', which perhaps explains Ua Laoghaire's initial puzzlement at the translation, as the semantic range of the words in Irish is different from that of the English, allowing for misinterpretation. In fact, on the first page of the text, Ó Fiannachta translates the expression as '*Tabhair Maitheamhnas agus Déan Dearmad'*, although on the title page and within the text, he returns to '*maith agus dearmad'*[42] perhaps an indication that he had some doubts about the translation. In Irish the translation '*Maith agus Dearmad'* is grammatically correct and corresponds exactly with the English - two verbs in the imperative form. There is an example of such an imperative usage in *Na Lochlannaigh*, by Mac Grianna:

> "Ná dearmad crann an iubhair an lá sin," arsa Mhurchadh, agus ba mhíle measa an chainnt sin, nó fuarthas Maolmórdha i bhfolach i gcrann iubhair nuair a bhí na Laighnigh ag teicheadh as Gleann Mháma, agus ba é Murchadh é féin a fuair é. (1938, p.89)

English also has a wider gramatical range here as the verbs cover both singular and plural forms, whereas in Irish they only cover the singular form.

The most likely cause for the confusion, however, may be that there is no exact equivalent concept in Irish of forgiving and forgetting. *Maith agus dearmad* is a literal word-for-word translation and does not exist in the Irish language in this idiomatic form. The phrase is found in Shakespeare's *King Lear*[43], and, idiomatically, in Cervantes' *Don Quijote de la Mancha*,[44] so the concept is both old and international. With regard to the phrase existing in Irish, lexicographical search so far only reveals the following from Foras na Gaeilge's online *New English-Irish Dictionary*: **'**he decided to forgive and forget **-** chinn sé an scéal a scaoileadh thairis,

[41] See entries in FGB (1977) for the verbal forms *dearmad* (to forget), p. 386 and *maith* (to forgive) p.823
[42] *Maith agus Dearmad,* title page, pp. 5,16 and 19 (two instances)
[43] Lear. You must bear with me - Pray you now, forget and forgive. I am old and foolish. (Shakespeare, 1994, 4.7: 84)
[44] 'Sancho', he said, 'Let us lay aside all manner of animosity, let us forget and forgive injuries'(p. 211)

shocraigh sé bogadh ar aghaidh'.[45] 'Maith agus dearmad'does not seem to be a phrase which immediately suggests itself to the (bi-lingual) native speaker as a translation, even though it is grammatically correct, as both words exist as verbs, even though they tend not to be used in their verbal forms, but rather as nominal phrases, for example, *dearmad a dhéanamh*, or *maithiúnas a thabhairt*. *Maith dom(h)* meaning 'Forgive me' does provide an example of *maith* used as a verb in the imperative requiring a preposition. In an enlightening entry in de Bhaldraithe's *English Irish Dictionary* (1959) the phrase 'I have never been forgotten for that' under the headword 'forgive' is translated as *'níor maitheadh é sin riamh dom'* (p.272) suggesting a connection between the two words in Irish by the time of *EID's* publication in 1959, perhaps an indication of the concept moving into the language from the English language.

However, looking again at the original phrase in *Don Quijote*, it is 'echemos pelillos a la mar'**,** which literally translated means 'Let's throw little hairs in the sea' (my translation).[46] This phrase can be variously translated as 'forgive and forget', 'let bygones be bygones' or 'bury the hatchet'. The phrase does not exist literally in Spanish, that is, the words 'perdonar' (to forgive) and 'olvidar' (to forget) do not combine to give an idiomatic expression. The repetition of the first syllable in two two-syllable verbs in English, along with the corresponding 'f' alliteration, may have contributed to to the phrase becoming a proverb, or idiomatic expression, in the English language. Examining the equivalent proverbs 'to bury the hatchet' and 'to let bygones be bygones,' then the dictionary does provide equivalents in Irish. 'To bury the hatchet' is translated as '*an chloch a chaitheamh as an muinchille,* or *'na seanchairteacha a fhágáil i do dhiaidh' or 'síocháin a dhéanamh.' 'To let bygones be bygones'* translates as *'an rud atá thart bíodh sé thart,'* or *'bíodh sé sin ina scéal thairis'*[47]*.* Mac Grianna actually uses the first of these in *Seideán Bruithne* to translate 'the past being…done with'. There is no concept of 'forgiveness' connected to the phrase here, either in Conrad's original or in Mac Grianna's translation, as Conrad is simply demonstrating the character Captain Mac Whirr's single-mindedness and lack of imagination:

[45] http/www.focloir.ie/en/dictionary/eid/forgive+and+forget

[46] - the text includes the accompanying footnote: 'In the original Spanish it is *echemos pelillos a la mar*: i.e: literally, let us throw small hairs into the sea; but figuratively, let us renew our friendship and forget past differences' (p 211)

[47] http/www.focloir.ie/en/dictionary/eid/forgive+and+forget

> but the past being to his mind done with, and the future not there yet, (*T,* p.155)
>
> Acht dar leis an rud a bhí thart go rabh sé thart, agus ní rabh an t-am a bhí le theacht ina láthair go fóill (*SB*, p l15)
>
> mais le passé étant, à ses yeux, bien passé, et le futur n'étant pas encore, (*T* p318)

Neither Conrad nor the French translation employ an idiom or proverb here. This may indicate that this phrase in Irish, while idiomatic, does not have the required semantic range to translate the English 'forgive and forget', and may be more closely aligned with a phrase such as 'over and done with', which Conrad partly uses. The concept of 'forgiveness' is harder to find in proverbs. Of the four examples I was able to access in *Tobar na Gaedhlige,* two from Mac Grianna, in *Almayer's Folly* and two from Domnall Mac Grianna in *Uaighneanna Chill Mhoirne* and *Gadaidheacht le Lámh Láidir,* '*maitheamnas a thabhairt agus dearmad a dhéanamh*' are used to translate 'forgive and forget.'

These phrases might have worked for either Ó Fiannachta or Ua Laoghaire as translations of this phrase, if they had been aware of these expressions. However, the emphasis in all these expressions is on forgetting rather than forgiving, In the story, a misunderstanding causes a grievance to be held by one character against his neighbour, and he puts a stop to the friendship between his young son and his neighbour's son. At the end the misunderstanding is cleared up and the children are permitted to become friends again. The moral of the story is to 'forgive and forget'. Whether Ua Laoghaire's catch-all term of 'forbearance' fully encapsulates the expression is debatable and demonstrates the endless interpretability of translated material.

Ua Laoghaire searches for equivalence in the form of a corresponding proverb. His attempt at translating the motto, by careful reading of the story and deciding that the true theme of the story is 'forbearance', leads him to the Irish saying '*Is breá í an fhoighne*', or 'Patience is a fine thing'[48], which he feels is 'in this case' the most fitting translation. This idiosyncratic and personal translation by Ua

[48] *Papers on Irish Idiom*, p.89. 'Patience is a fine thing' is Ua Laoghaire's translation of his translation.

Laoghaire has left aside any attempt to translate the concept of forgiveness, surely the most important message of the story. Ua Laoghaire's method, that is, careful reading of the source text, is noteworthy. His translation of 'forgive and forget' becomes filtered through his own interpretation of the text, which ultimately leads him to discard the concept of forgiveness and replace it with that of 'forbearance'. The semantic range of the word 'forgiveness' in English does include undertones of forbearance, of toleration, of long-suffering acceptance, but this is just part of the meaning of the word. From the dictionary definitions below, the semantic range of both words is clear from these excerpts from the *Shorter Oxford Dictionary* (1983)

> Forget - to lose remembrance of; to cease to retain in one's memory; to fail to call to mind…to omit or neglect through inadvertence (p.791)
>
> Forgive – to give up, cease to harbour (resentment etc.)…to give up resentment against…to make excuse for, regard indulgently (p.791)

and from *The Free Dictionary* online

> To banish from one's thoughts: *forget a disgrace*...To disregard on purpose. Usually used in the imperative: *Oh, forget it. I refuse to go!*... To cease remembering: *Let's forgive and forget.* (*https://www.thefreedictionary.com/forget* 26/09/18)

Included in the definitions of forget above, is 'to banish from one's thoughts,' as well as 'to cease remembering ' which actually give 'Let's forgive and forget' as an example. These are the meanings that Ua Laoghaire disputes the existence of in the semantic range of the word in Irish, and indeed, this exact meaning does not exist in the definition of 'forget' as laid out in the definition in *FGB* (1977, p385). Whether from the influence of the English language, or from other unknown influences, this meaning most definitely exists by the time that Mac Grianna is translating for An Gúm.

Ua Laoghaire's method of finding the most appropriate translation is that of careful reading of the source text and summarising what he regards as the over-riding theme of the story, which he sums up in one word, 'forbearance'. This again is a word which has a wide semantic range in English, with synonyms that include - patient self-control; restraint and tolerance: in Irish it is defined as *fadfhulaingt*, which can be translated as 'long-suffering', among others, which include *fadaraí* and *foighne*.

> *fadfhulaingt*; Silence; patience, forbearance, *fadaraí*; Long-suffering, forbearance, patience. *fulaingt*: (Capacity for) suffering; endurance, tolerance, forbearance. *staonadh,* -nta, m., act of yielding, flinching, bonding; cessation; bias, inclination. (Dinneen, 1904, *Foclóir Gaeilge agus Béarla, an Irish English Dictionary,* p.691)

Ua Laoghaire essentially limits the semantic range to one word '*foighne*'. The expression *Is breá í an fhoighne* states quite flatly that patience is a fine thing and ignores the exhortative nature of the English expression, as the imperative/subjunctive form of the expression implies.

There is a tone of disapproval, albeit a slightly humorous one, when he talks about metaphor in the English language. It comes across as a suspicion of the imprecise nature of metaphor:

> 'Read over the English matter carefully. Take all the ideas into your mind. Squeeze the ideas clean from the English *froth*. Be sure that you allow none of that oozy stuff to remain. English is full of it. You must also get rid of everything in shape of metaphor. Take instead of it the true idea which the metaphor is intended to convey. When you have the ideas cleared completely of foreign matter, put them into the Irish side of your mind, and shape them in the Irish language, just as you would if they had been your own ideas from the start. (Ua Laoghaire, 1926, p.92)

It must be assumed that Ua Laoghaire is referring here to naturally occuring metaphorical, idiomatic language found in non-literary writing, exactly the sort of idiomatic expression that is 'forgive and forget', in fact: his prosaic, and, frankly, dull, as well as inaccurate, translation of this phrase illustrates his suspicion of image and metaphor. In his creation and championing of the concept of *caint na ndaoine*, he is usually applauded for his modernising approach in the face of those who would have returned Irish to the archaism of previous centuries. His modernising tendency sanctions a return to simplified structures in the language: *Séadhna*, his ground-breaking work in the Irish language, is striking in its adherence to short simple sentences, and they are stylistically appropriate for the recounting of a folkloric tale. Ua Laoghaire seems to conclude that this style, simple and unadorned, is inherent to the nature of the Irish language. Significantly, he talks of the importance of syntax in translation, rather than lexis, as the basis of 'good' Irish, and seems to uphold an almost cavalier attitude to the importation of words from English (*Béarlachas*):

> ‘By far the most important matter in connection with the revival of our language is the syntax. *If the syntax be good, we have good Irish, even if half the words were foreign. If the syntax be bad, the language is not Irish at all, even though each separate word be the purest Irish*.’ (1926, p.84).

His name for his concept, *caint na ndaoine,* is a strong indication that the basis for this style is speech rather than writing. Ua Laoghaire’s limitation is that he does not wish to allow the Irish language to be open to experimentation or development in its written form. His *soi-disant* modernisation of the language is as conservative and prescriptive as his opponents’ desire to preserve archaisms.

Ua Laoghaire is now perceived as a moderniser within the development of the Irish language, and in his promotion of the people’s speech, he certainly gave the language and its speakers a sense of confidence and self-belief which allowed the spoken form of the language a respect and value not afforded, historically, by many other cultures to their vernacular speech, (the English language being a notable example). Indeed there is evidence to suggest that Irish, which had earlier maintained a standard written form, had, previously, a similarly rather contemptuous attitude to *caint na ndaoine*. As Ó Rahilly puts it:

> One reason for the silence of our literature on the question of dialects is to be found in the fact that the literary classes, as long as they continued to exist, had at their command a standard form of Irish which educated men understood everywhere, and they regarded the common people and their speech with undisguised contempt. (*Irish Dialects Past and Present*, *with chapters on Scottish and Manx,* 1932, p.5)

The other side of this linguistic coin, however, was a rejection and suspicion of movement or development within the language, and a desire for conservation and preservation that is not possible in any language. Although he advocated the use of the people’s speech, his attitude to it was as hidebound and reactionary as that of those who opposed it.

Not only is the imprecise nature of metaphor met with suspicion by Ua Laoghaire, but the fact that it is *English* metaphor renders it doubly suspicious: the influence of English upon the Irish language not only affects the language and its structures, but the purity of Irish thought itself. Thus, the translator must appropriate the thoughts of the English writer and cleanse them of the ‘impurities’ of the English language. This nationalistically-inspired elevation of the target language above that

of the source language allows the translator a great deal of freedom to make a very, to use a prescriptive term, loose interpretation of the text. Nonetheless, no matter how much nationalism inspired Ua Laoghaire's thinking on language, his primary concern was the preservation and strengthening of a language weakened by centuries of colonisation and its resultant neglect.

'Periodic Sentences' in English and Irish

The other side of the translation coin, however, is the style of English with which Mac Grianna and other translators have to contend. This style became current in the nineteenth century, as a result of the great flowering of novel-writing that century, influenced by the styles of novelists such as Jane Austen at the beginning of the century to Thomas Hardy at the end, culminating in the written English style of the late nineteenth century and early years of the twentieth century, when Conrad was writing prose. This nineteenth century style can be traced through the humanist movement of the fifteenth and sixteenth century, influenced by Petrarch's discovery of texts by Cicero, which engendered an expansion of both style and vocabulary based on his writings, and introduced the Ciceronian or 'periodic' sentence into English writing.[49]. Ian Gordon, in *The Movement of English Prose*, describes its effect on English style:

> The classical Latin sentence, with its subordination (hypotaxis) of clauses, its massive but controlled length, its delayed verb, its sense not completed till the last word has been written, its skilful intricacy and artful, rhythmical devices, was a challenge to renaissance virtuosity, and it was speedily imitated so far as (and sometimes beyond what) the mechanics of the English sentence would permit. (1966, p.77)

The influence of this type of sentence on English writing is very clearly seen in the work of the great eighteenth- and nineteenth-century English novelists from Richardson to Dickens, and it forms the basis of formal and academic writing in English to the present day. The great expansion in vocabulary based on Latin terms, and the tendency for these words to be longer, with more syllables, than native words, in turn affected the rhythm of the English sentence, as Gordon notes:

> The new polysyllabic Latin words affected the movement of the sentence. Once they had settled down into their final English form, they had to be matched with the shorter and structural native words. (1966, p.76)

[49] Gordon, I. *The Movement of English Prose*, (1966) *passim*

These two influences came together to form the 'periodic sentence', which, according to Gordon, 'by the nineteenth century came to be regarded by the English grammar writers as the ultimate form of good prose' (p.78). The periodic sentence consists of a series of thoughts culminating in the most important of those, which arrives at the end of the sentence. This style of sentence can be found in Conrad's writing, particularly in early works such as his first novel, *Almayer's Folly*, and before his style had reached its full maturity, as follows:

> While she was burning the furniture, and tearing down the pretty curtains in her unreasoning hate of those signs of civilisation, Almayer, cowed by these outbursts of savage nature, meditated in silence on the best way of getting rid of her. (*AlF*, p.26)
>
> Ba ghnáthach léithe trioc a dhóghadh agus cúirtíní a strócadh nuair a thigeadh an tallann uirthe, agus sgannruigheadh sí Almayer agus bhíodh sé ag meabhrughadh goidé an dóigh a b'fhearr fagháil réidhtighthe léithe. (*DCA*, p.37)
>
> Tandis qu'elle brûlait les meubles et déchirait les jolis rideaux dans son hostilité instinctive à ces symboles de la civilisation, Almayer, intimidé par ces explosions d'une nature sauvage, méditait en silence sur les meilleurs moyens de se débarrasser d'elle. (*FA*, p.24)

In the example above, Mac Grianna translates with one full sentence, but unlike the original, he has produced a long compound sentence rather than a complex one, and this seems to be a typical expedient for him in translating complex sentences, of which there are many in nineteenth- century English literature, and in Conrad's prose. Two of the three clauses are simple sentences linked with 'agus'. The original sentence is a fairly typical example of Conrad's prose, and the sentence structure reflects the accepted style in English writing, both literary and non-literary, of the nineteenth century. It is Maria Edgeworth's style translated by Ó Fiannachta, and that of the prose extracts used by Ó Nualláin in *Studies in Modern Irish, Part II*. The same style, which prevailed in works of varying degrees of literary merit, would have been encountered by all of the translators on An Gúm's translation scheme, with its propensity for publishing nineteenth century and early twentieth century popular novels.

Mac Grianna's sentence above, nonetheless, translates the source in rich idiomatic Irish which, while not obeying any 'word-for-word' prescriptions, 'feels right', that is to say, is embedded within the syntax, vocabulary and idiomatic expression of

Irish. Ua Laoghaire and Ó Nualláin's stipulations with regard to translation seem to stem from the realisation of the fundamental differences between the two languages combined with what seems and, probably to some extent, was a nationalistic desire to preserve the Irish of the time and protect it from the encroaching march of *Béarla* and *Béarlachas*. Written English, with its complex sentence structure, and two-tiered vocabulary, (where Latin-based words indicate a certain level of education on the part of the writer, and native Anglo-Saxon vocabulary indicates the opposite), was a very different phenomenon from the *caint na ndaoine* recommended by Ua Laoghaire. The question that remains is whether there is something inherent within the language which prevents this complexity, and to what extent critics accepted Ua Laoghaire's beliefs without further investigation. His recommendation of a return to *caint na ndaoine*, in other words, common speech, would now indicate that any written form of the language based on such a premise is bound to be non-complex. There seems to be a general consensus, or at least, a prevailing belief, propounded by Ua Laoghaire, expanded on by Ó Nualláin, and accepted right up to the present day that long, complex sentences, such as the English periodic sentence cannot be reproduced in translation in the Irish language.

However, earlier writings demonstrate that Irish has a standard written form which could cope with complexity both linguistically and intellectually. The sentences in the following examples from Séathrún Céitinn's *Trí Bíor-Ghaoithe an Bháis* and Aodh Mac Aingil's *Scáthán Shacramuinte na hAithridh* respectively, from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, written in Early Modern Irish, are long and complex, with interconnecting clauses allowing an intricate thought process to develop

> Acht cheana dá bhfiafruigheadh duine créad as a nabraim nó as a bhforáilim ar dhuine bheith ar a choimhéad ar an mbá gcorpordha, 7 gan dol tairis ag aon-duine, mo fhreagra air gurab é is fáth dhomh, do bhríogh go dtuigim nach téid an bás corpardha i ndioth ná i ndochar don druing chuireas inneall 7 ordughadh orra féin ré hucht an bháis, mar atáid na daoine naomhtha neamhurchóideacha chathuigheas ris na heasgcáirdibh leónadh anam na hanma .i. grása Dé is anam don anam. (Céitinn, *Trí Bíor-Ghaoithe an Bháis* 1932, p.86)

And in this instance:

> Ní hé as mian leó a rádh nach bíonn foghnamh ar an aithrighi a ccás go bhfhillfitheá dochum na bpeacadh arís, ór as deimhin, má tá aithrighi dá-ríribh

> aniodh agad, gur sgrios do pheacadha uile uait gé go ttuitfitheá amárach ionnta; achd adeirid go bhuil d'fhiachuibh ort ní hé amháin na peacuidh do-rínis do chaoineadh achd rún daingean do ghlacadh gan a ndénamh arís. (Mac Aingil, *Scáthán Shacramuinte na hAithridh* 1952, p.68)

These sentences demonstrate that the Irish language has the capacity to develop complexity of syntax and grammar, and to express intellectual concepts in a highly organised and non-simplistic way. This is the style of Irish that Ua Laoghaire seems to wish away, or which he certainly considers to be out-dated and antiquated. He is aware of the complications that arise from syntactic differences within the two languages, evidenced in this letter to Ó Nualláin, who quotes it in his autobiography, *Beatha Duine a Thoil* (1950). Ua Laoghaire takes exception to a sentence from a letter from Ó Nualláin', '*táim ag cur rainnt rudaí beaga chugat'* (p.133). Although he concedes that the sentence in itself is grammatically correct, it will not allow for expansion, as that might incur the *cur*. In order to allow for lengthening of the sentence by the addition of other nouns, it should, according to Úa Laoghaire, take the following form '*Tá rainnt rudaí beaga agam 'á chur chugat*.', as he explains:

> Dá mbeadh ainmniú fada ar 'an rainnt rudaí beaga' chifá féin gur saoráidighe go mór an chuma san adeirim ná an chuma eile….Tá an dá shaghas Gaoluinne seo ceart:-
>
> 1°. Táim ag treabhadh na páirce.
>
> 2°. Tá an pháirc agam 'á threabadh.
>
> Leanaid na ráidhte fada uimhir a dó. Féadann an rádh gearr aon cheann acu do leanamhaint. Is é mo thithighe-se (my experience) nach féidir rádh fada do chumadh ar aon tslacht, má leantar uimhir a haon. (1950, p.133)

Ua Laoghaire is aware of the syntactic differences that can trip up even an experienced non-native speaker like Ó Nualláin and of the nice distinctions of use within the language that deliver speech, and writing, that is '*slacht*' or neat and tidy. No doubt, this desire for neatness and concision in the Irish language is behind Ua Laoghaire's impatience with the 'froth' of the English language. He has allowed for the expansion of the sentence as far as the 'neatest' way to provide a list of nouns, avoiding the genitive case. Clausal expansion of sentences in Irish does not please him, as control within the sentence is more easily lost, and the sentence may become 'untidy'.

Ó Nualláin's Principles for Translation from English to Irish

Ua Laoghaire's influence on translation theory in Ireland is seen in another contemporary voice in the field of translation, that of the afore-mentioned Gearóid Ó Nualláin, who, in his advanced textbook for schools, *Studies in Modern Irish, Part II* (1922), categorically lays out a list of fairly prescriptive guidelines for the student of translation of English into Irish, and for prospective translators themselves. Ó Nualláin, uncle of the writer Brian Ó Nualláin, admired Ua Laoghaire to such an extent that he abandoned the Ulster Irish he learned at school in Belfast in order to adopt Ua Laoghaire's Munster Irish[50].

The book provides samples from English texts for translation, with guidelines from Ó Nualláin as to the best way to translate them from Irish. Ó Nualláin places high value on translation, describing it as 'this highest fruit of linguistic study' which 'is of the greatest efficacy in perfecting the writer's style' (1922, p.2). It is to be inferred that it is the writer's style in the Irish language which will benefit from the exercise of translation. The assumption is also there that the source language for translation is English, which indeed it was for the most part by the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries, even though in earlier centuries the opposite was often the case.[51]

In his introduction to the book, Ó Nualláin sets out his stall in his first sentence:

> Proficiency in the short sentence is indispensable for the writer of continuous prose. But the man who can make bricks is not necessarily a good mason. Thus one may be able to translate short detached sentences and yet be quite at sea in continuous prose.(1922, p.1)

Here, Ó Nualláin seems to indicate that the short sentence, in itself, is insufficient for the writer and, by extension, the translator, in order to write or translate prose. However, when it comes to translating from Irish to English, the translator must 'steer clear of the bogey of literal translation' (p.1) and that such translation must be 'consistent with the laws of Irish thought and expression'. 'Irish thought and expression' are the watchwords of acceptable translation from English: the needs of the target language, Irish, take precedence over those of the original text, in order to

[50]See Ó Nualláin's biography *Beatha Dhuine a Thoil* (1950) pp. 49 and 58.
[51] See Chapter 1.

give the translation due authenticity. The abiding reason for the importance of 'Irish thought and expression' lies in the concept of the language as an expression of the national character, or of nationality itself:

> Language is an index to the national character. The fundamentals of the Irish character are, when all is said and done, very different to those of the English character, in spite of the strong Celtic elements transfused through the Saxon groundwork of the latter. (1922, p.1)

The strongly nationalistic tone of this statement reflects the atmosphere of the times: the book appeared in 1920, four years after the Easter Rising of 1916, and two years before the establishment of the Irish Free State, and the subsequent Civil War. The Irish language is here firmly bound to political aspirations of independence, and, since the writer is a Catholic priest, it can also be inferred, to the aspirations, political and spiritual, of the Catholic Church in Ireland.

In a key remark in his introduction, he then informs the reader that:

> In deference to the laws of Irish expression we must emancipate ourselves from the English *words*, as such, grasp the kernel of thought or emotion to be conveyed, and endeavour to clothe that kernel with the Irish words best suited to express the essential inner meaning, (1922, p.1)

The 'essential inner meaning' is the core phrase here – the bare bones of the thought that lie behind the material to be translated are important, rather than the fullness of expression of the English original. The essentially alien nature of the Irish language from the English must be preserved and, indeed, emphasised, to reflect difference: difference of language, nation and religion. This also reflects the prevailing belief that persists from at least the mid-nineteenth century that the correct use of any language, Irish or English, was an indicator of moral probity and uprightness.[52] Ó Nualláin echoes Ua Laoghaire's key observation, his core principle with regard to the translation of English into Irish. This principle of looking towards the 'thoughts' rather than the 'words' to engender meaning, is also the core difficulty in the translation of creative writing. In translating creative writing, in order to produce some form of Nida's 'equivalent effect' in the style of such writing, the 'how'

[52] 'Voices ranging from the writers of books on etiquette to intellectuals like Alford …and Trench …connected propriety and correctness in speech with moral excellence, and saw linguistic sloppiness reflected in careless dress and behaviour – a kind of linguistic relativity still very popular among people who feel called upon to preserve the wells of English undefiled'. (Görlach, M. (1999) *English in Nineteenth-Century England* p.27).

is equally important as the ‘what’ that is translated. The aspiration of ‘equivalent effect’, where the translated text will have the same ‘effect’ upon the reader in the target language, that the original text has upon the reader in the original language, may be more difficult to accomplish when stylistic and rhetorical considerations, such as irony, are added to the translation mix. Conrad’s works are all infused with a subtle ironic tone which can be difficult for the translator to reproduce. In terms of translation, these factors combine to make it a cause of moral as well as nationalistic concern that, in the translating of the two languages, the native language should be transferred in its ‘purest’ form. The Irish language is here in the process of becoming iconised along with the Church and the process of nationhood, and the vocabulary that pertains to it, in terms of its ‘purity’ and ‘correctness’ reflects this connection.

Ó Nuallain proceeds to enumerate what he believes to be the ‘most striking differences between Irish and English’ (1922, p.3), and it is useful, at this point, to look at each of his assertions, or principles (eighteen in all) in the light of Mac Grianna’s translations of Conrad**.**

In Principle 1, Ó Nualláin discusses translation of metaphorical language from English to Irish. Ó Nualláin asserts that ‘English is fond of metaphor and personification. Irish is on the whole more restrained and matter-of-fact.’ (1922, p.3). Ó Nualláin suggests three ways for the translator to cope with this apparently superfluous imagery of the English language: to eschew or ‘tone down’ the metaphor: to use a different metaphor ‘more suitable because more familiar’: ‘definitely stated metaphor’ will contrast with the ‘mere *allusiveness* of English’ or a simile will replace the metaphor.

Principle 2 states that ‘the English active voice becomes in Irish the passive or autonomous’ (1922, p.4) Principle 3 reverses this where ‘‘the English passive is frequently rendered by the active in Irish’ (1922, p.4). These two principles do not detail the differences between the English passive voice and the Irish autonomous tense, but it does reflect the fact that the English passive is often rendered by an active tense in Irish.

Principle 4 states that single adjectives in English must be expanded into a phrase or clause in Irish. Principle 5 states that epithets sometimes have to be transferred. Principle 6 notes the necessity of omitting certain phrases from the Irish

translation ‘as being unnatural, or unmeaning repetitions’ (1922, p.5). Principle 7 conversely, notes that words not in the English source text must be inserted into the Irish text ‘to complete the sense or make the logical argument clear’ (1922, p.5). In Mac Grianna’s translations, omissions are much more common than additions to the text.

Principle 8 observes that that an adverb qualifying an adjective will be rendered in Irish (‘as in Latin’ (1922, p.6)) by two synonymous adjectives. Principle 9 reveals instances where the English relative construction becomes non-relative in Irish. Principle 10 is the reverse of this, where the English non-relative construction becomes relative in Irish. Principle 11 is that of changing the sequence of clauses or sentences to provide the logical sequence that may be absent from English. According to Ó Nualláin, ‘Irish loves logical order: English is sometimes whimsically illogical’ (1922, p.7).

Principle 12 deals with what Ó Nualláin describes as ‘differences of colour and tone’ in the two languages, asserting that ‘Irish is sometimes *less highly coloured*.’ (1922, p.7). The converse of this is then given, citing examples where Irish is ‘*more highly coloured*’, (1922, p.8). He does not give any further explanation of these claims, but illustrates them with a raft of examples. His terms are non-specific and highly interpretable – capturing the essence of the challenge that is put before all translators – how much can, and should, a translator veer from a word-for-word direct translation and bring in a level of personality and creativity in to the translation? This is also true for principles 13, 14, 17 and 18 (below), which are also explained in abstract and imprecise terms, allowing again a level of licence to the translator to move away from strict adherence to the source text.

Principle 13 describes English as ‘*allusive’* (1922, p.8) whereas Irish is ‘*direct*’. Principle 14 stipulates that ‘Irish is fond of *the concrete*, where English frequently has *the abstract*’ (1922, p.8). Principle 15 discusses tense, specifically the rendering of the English perfect and pluperfect with the Irish simple past. Principle 16 observes the tendency in Irish to employ the progressive tense to translate the simple present tense in English. Principle 17 discusses the subjectivity of English versus the objective view of Irish.

Principle 18 notes the distinctive nature of idiom in the two languages, citing an example where the English ‘he managed to fall on his feet’ is translated as ‘do thug Dia dhó gur ghaibh sé a bhuinn’ (1922, p.11). For Ó Nualláin this form of idiom in Irish ‘is only one of many instances in which the Irish faith in God, and consciousness of His presence and His providence, are exemplified in the language’ (1922, p.11).

Ó Nualláin’s eighteen principles prefigure a very similar set of principles that are set out by Savory in his 1957 book *The Art of Translation*. His principles, as he terms them, in a chapter aptly entitled ‘The Principles of Translation’ are laid out in ‘contrasting terms’ as follows: a translation must give the words of the original: a translation must give the ideas of the original. a translation should read like an original work:.a translation should read like a translation: a translation should reflect the style of the original: a translation should possess the style of the translator: a translation should read as a contemporary of the original: a translation should read as a contemporary of the translator: a translation may add or omit from the original: a translation may never add or omit from the original: a translation of verse should be in prose: a translation of verse should be in verse’. (1957, p.49)

Once again these principles illuminate the dichotomies of translation, that of ‘literal’ versus ‘faithful’ translation, and latterly of prescriptivism versus descriptivism in the study of translation. Critical comment on translation in the early and middle part of the twentieth century was for the most part prescriptive: the very act of creating a set of ‘principles’ for translation would now be seen as prescriptive Savory here is pointing out the inherent dichotomies in translation theory. The limits of prescriptivism can be seen in the contradictory nature of the principles (among others, the ninth and tenth, for example, amply illustrate the inherent contradictions). Savory is aware of these contradictions and the confusion that is engendered by them in translation:

> It would almost be true to say that there are no universally accepted principles of translation, because the only people qualified to formulate them have never agreed among themselves, but have often and for so long contradicted each other that they have bequeathed to us a welter of confused thought which must be hard to parallel in other fields of literature (1957, p.48)

Savory makes the point that, not only does the original text embody the author's style, but the translated text will also embody the style of the translator:

> Style is the essential characteristic of every piece of writing, the outcome of the writer's personality and his emotions at the moment, and no single paragraph can be put together without revealing in some degree the nature of its author. But what is true of the author is true also of the translator. The author's style, natural or adopted, determines his choice of a word, and…the translator is often compelled to make a choice between alternatives. The choice he makes cannot be uninfluenced by his own personality, cannot but reflect, though dimly, his own style. (1957, p.54)

This has a direct bearing on Mac Grianna as a translator generally and particularly when he translates the work of another creative such as Conrad. This stylistic aspect of Mac Grianna's translation will be investigated in the next chapter.

Maolmhaodhóg Ó Ruairc examines Ó Nualláin's principles in *Dúchas na Gaeilge* (1996) and feels that: 'is é an locht atá orthu go bhfuil siad bunaithe ar a thaithí féin agus é i mbun na téacsanna a aistriú agus ar na rialacha a tharraing sé as an gcleachtadh sin.' (1996, p.211) and 'is léir gur cur chuige an-phearsanta atá mar bhunús aige.' (1996, p.211). Despite this perhaps too-personal outlook, for Ó Ruairc, Ó Nualláin's perspective on translation is worthwhile:

> … tugann sé ciall do dhúchas na teanga, ciall do na cleasanna nár luigh rómhaith leis an teanga, ach ar deireadh thiar bhí an cur chuige róscaoilte (1996, p.211)

For Ó Ruairc, Ó Nualláin's approach tries but fails to be systematic, his methods of translating are too idiosyncratic, his attempts at getting to the inner meaning of the text carries him too far away from the original meaning. Ó Ruairc illustrates this idiosyncratic style with two examples which he feels illustrate this 'cur chuige an-phearsanta' – '*eolas nach féidir a bhréagnú'* to translate 'on conclusive grounds' and '*nuair nach raibh aon eolas a mbréagnaithe ag lucht staire na haimsire seo'* for 'in the absence of evidence to the contrary'. Ó Ruairc gives alternatives to his translations in both cases: '*forais dhochloíte*' and '*in éagmais fianaise dá mhalairt*' (1996, p.211). It is a matter of opinion whether Ó Ruairc or Ó Nualláin has given a 'better' translation of these phrases here, he seems to be trying to mimic the shape and concision of the English language original while Ó Nualláin renders very much a target language oriented version which makes no attempt to replicate the structures

of the English original. Ó Ruairc states that 'Bheadh sé an-deacair filleadh ar an abairt i mBéarla trína aistriúcháin siúd a iompú droim ar ais.' (1996, p.211), although it is a moot point as to whether any piece of translation can be translated back exactly to the words of original text. According to Ó Ruairc, his idiosyncrasies fail in particular when technical words and phrases have to be translated. Ó Ruairc's re-translations of Ó Nualláin, it could be argued, are examples of the '*Béarlachas*' that Ó Nualláin was trying to avoid, and cling too closely to the English original, lacking the clarity of thought that Ó Nualláin's versions give.

Ó Nualláin's approach reflects not only the prescriptivism towards translation which was typical of the time and persisted until relatively recently, but also the nationalistic and protectionist attitude towards the Irish language exemplified by that of an t-Athair Peadar Ua Laoghaire. Ó Nualláin's attempts to explain the basic differences between the two languages can seem contradictory, and his terms of reference are not clearly defined, relying as they do on abstract terms such as 'the concrete'. However, his points do encapsulate the most common difficulties of translation between the two languages, many examples of which are present in Mac Grianna's translation of Conrad. They also embody the rather restrictive, as well as prescriptive, prevailing attitude towards the act of translating from English to Irish. His notes on and examples of 'metaphor' 'allusiveness' and 'tone', alongside his horror of 'literal translation', result in some very idiosyncratic translations, where at times it can be difficult to find the original English meaning within the Irish translation, even though the translation of meaning rather than words is Ó Nualláin's clearly stated aim.

In the first sentence of his introduction, Ó Nualláin praises 'proficiency in the short sentence' (1922, p.1) for writers, although admitting that a translator might be 'quite at sea in continuous prose' (1922, p.1). In his practical advice with regard to individual translations within the book, he often recommends breaking down a long English sentence into a series of shorter sentences in Irish. The English passages for translation in Section I of the book are divided by Ó Nualláin into sections entitled 'Descriptive', 'Historical', 'Philosophical', 'Criticism', and 'Miscellaneous', where Ó Nualláin provides a sample translation and comments upon the linguistic and stylistic choices he makes to produce it . Section II consists of general passages for

translation for the student. The first recommendation that he makes, in the first of the 'descriptive' passages, is to break up the first sentence:

> Notice, in the first place, that there is too much detail in the opening sentence. We shall therefore make two out of it. (1922, p.12).

An Gúm's guidelines for translators, referred to above, also stipulate that the translator should steer clear of long sentences in Irish translation from English, and should break up long English sentences into short sentences in Irish.

> Tá an Béarla (scríofa) an-tugtha d'abairtí fada casta – clásail agus fochlásail ag sileadh as a chéile. Nuair a dhéantar iarracht aithris a dhéanamh ar abairt mar sin i nGaeilge, is minic a bhíonn an toradh dothuigthe, ar an gcéad léamh ach go háirithe. Ba chóir a leithéid d'abairt a bhriseadh agus dhá nó trí abairt ghearra a scríobh ina áit. (1922, p.3)

The Guidelines do not explain why translating a long sentence from English into a long sentence in Irish produces a result that is 'dothuigthe'. Again, this advice, for non-literary translation, is practical and aimed at helping to clarify the complicated and jargon-filled English of government bureaucracy. As advice for literary translation, however, it may militate against sensitivity to the source author's style and the translation may engender a diminution of that style.

Discussion of Ó Nualláin's principles

The first principle Ó Nualláin puts forward is that of translation of metaphorical language from English to Irish. Ó Nualláin asserts that 'English is fond of metaphor and personification. Irish is on the whole more restrained and matter-of-fact.' (1922, p.3). .

Figurative language is arguably the most difficult kind of language to translate and Ó Nualláin has attempted to define and categorise the figurative differences in the two languages. He suggests three ways for the translator to cope with (in his view) superfluous imagery in the English language:

> to eschew or 'tone down' the metaphor: the example he gives is that of '*revealing*…her noble, graceful hull' – *do gheibhtí radharc ar adhmad a sleasa* '*snatching* a few hours bliss' –' *ag súgradh dhóibh féin ar feadh an tamaill bhig aoibhnis'*

‘the *spell* of its culture fell (on every foreigner)’- *na go gcuireadh, mar a déarfá, nosa na n~Gaedheal fé dhraoidheacht é*’ (1922 p.3)

to use a different metaphor ‘more suitable because more familiar.’ Examples include:

the *fullnes*s of his heart would not suffer – *bhí tocht chómh trom san ar a chroidhe* and (c)
‘definitely stated metaphor’ will contrast with the ‘mere *allusiveness* of English’ or a simile will replace the metaphor – examples include:
‘*icy temper’ – dá mhéid doicheall agus duairceas a bhíodh air*,
‘the *resistless dash* of his onset’ – *mar a scuabfadh feidhm na fairrge feamain*
‘their *eddying* dispersion’ – *iad ag leathadh ón a chéile ar nós tonntracha na mara* (1922, p.4)

Principles 1, 5, 12, 13 and 18, address his concerns as to the difficulties of translating idiomatic and metaphorical language. This is a concern for Mac Grianna with Conrad’s work, as a significant proportion of it consists of descriptive passages, whether of landscape or action sequences. The following passage shows Mac Grianna’s response to one such descriptive passage.

> The *Nan-Shan* was ploughing a vanishing furrow upon the circle of the sea that had the surface and the shimmer of an undulating piece of grey silk. The sun, pale and without rays, poured down the leaden heat in a strangely indecisive light and the Chinamen were lying prostrate about the decks. Their bloodless, pinched, yellow faces were like the faces of bilious invalids.’ (*T*, p.164)

> Bhí an Nan-Shan ag treabhadh iomaire cubhair ar dhruim na mara – an mhuir a rabh croiceann comh mín loinnireach uirthe le gréasán síoda a bhéadh ag lúbarnaigh. Bhí ghrian bháithteach nach rabh cosa ar bith aiste, ag tabhairt marbh-sholas aistidheach agus ag dórtadh anuas an mar bhéadh luaidh leagtha ann. Bhí na Sinigh ina luighe is a dtarr ináirde ar an bhord. Bhí aghaidheanna buidhe tláithe ortha mar bhéadh daoine a mbéadh glas-seile ortha.’(*SB*, p.31)

> La surface circulaire de la mer avait le lustre ondoyant d’une étoffe de soie grise au travers de laquelle le ‘Nan-Shan’ traçait un sillon fugitif. Le soleil, pâle et sans rayons, répandait une chaleur de plomb dans une lumière bizarrement diffuse. Les Chinois s’étaient couchés tout de leur long sur le pont. Leurs visages jaunes, pincés et anémiques, ressemblaient à des figures de bilieux. (*T*, p.328)

The first line has lyrical elements in the description of the ship's progress through the sea. In these sentences Mac Grianna's response to Conrad's lyricism emcompasses all of Ó Nualláin's principles regarding figurative language:'Irish will uses a different metaphor – more suitable because more familiar' – here Conrad's metaphor of ploughing a vanishing furrow is maintained in part by Mac Grianna, but rather than 'vanishing', Mac Grianna's ship is 'ag treabhadh iomaire cubhair', arguably a more 'familiar' and more 'concrete' metaphor, since *cubhar*, meaning foam, is an image concretely associated with the sea. The impermanence and evanescence of the foam makes this an imaginative and apt image to replace the concept of 'vanishing furrow', and reveals Mac Grianna's sensitivity as a translator to lyrical and poetic material. His translation of 'an undulating piece of grey silk' employs the word 'gréasán' which means woven material, but also has the meaning of 'web', which emphasises its fineness, by association with the delicacy of a spider's web. In calling to mind the silveriness of a spider's web, Mac Grianna evokes the colour of the silk even though he omits mention of the colour in the translation. This omission is perhaps necessary as the colours of the spectrum do not translate easily into Irish from English**.**

This sentence also causes the French translation to depart from its usual fairly close word-for-word translation and to transpose the English syntactic construction in a way more normally associated with Irish. The second clause which describes the sea is brought to the beginning of the sentence. In terms of the grammatical construction of this sentence, there seems to be no necessity for this, as the sentence can be transposed back to the form it takes in English:

> *Le Nan-Shan traçait un sillon fugitif au travers de la surface circulaire de la mer qui avait le lustre ondoyant d'un étoffe de soie gris.*

It is unclear why this sentence should not be translated directly from the English, but the lyricism of Conrad's sentence may have provided inspiration for the more expressive translation. There is also a transferred epithet here in the French translation, where Conrad's 'lustre of an undulating piece of grey silk' becomes 'the undulating lustre of a piece of grey silk'.

Ó Nualláin's stipulation that 'there will be no metaphor at all in the Irish rendering, or it will be toned down in various ways' (p.3), has been followed here by

Mac Grianna in the non-translation of 'circle of the sea', and by replacing it with the Irish phrase '*druim na* mara', or 'surface of the sea', which then echoes Conrad's own mention of the sea's surface later in the sentence. In the third sentence he also translates Conrad's 'leaden heat' with the more familiar Irish phrase '*luaidh leághtha*', meaning molten lead, again perhaps fulfilling the stipulation to use 'a different metaphor:- more suitable because more familiar'.

This also illustrates Ó Nualláin's third stipulation with regard to his first principle, that 'There will be a definitively stated metaphor, as contrasted with the mere *allusiveness* of English: or instead of a metaphor we shall have a *simile*' (1922, p.3), as in '*mar a bheadh luaidh leághtha ann'*. The 'definitively stated metaphor' in contrast to the 'mere' allusiveness of the English original seems to hint at a belief that the Irish language possesses a certain no-nonsense clarity compared with a sort of woollyness of expression in English: this may spring from the more abstract nature of nineteenth century, and early twentieth century English written style, as discussed previously.

Ó Nualláin second principle states that the English active voice becomes passive or autonomous in Irish, giving the following examples:

> rolling – *dá luasgadh*
>
> whirling…rushing – *dá suathadh…dá tiomáint*
>
> printing and throwing open – *dá gcur i gcló agus …dá leathadh*
>
> as she went over starboard – *nuair a luaisgtí í deiseal* (1922, p.4)

Here he touches on one of the major differences in Irish and English, that which pertains to the expression of voice in the two languages. Voice is defined by Ó Corráin (Aspects of Voice in the Grammatical Structure of Irish, 2001) as:

> the verbal system which relates the subject of the sentence to the proposition being described and which subsumes the complex set of interrelationships existing between principles such as causativity, agency, transitivity and reciprocity. (p.100)

There is a great difference in underlying grammatical structure in the expression of voice in the two languages. The most noticeable difference is that of the expression

of passivity. In many cases where English provides an active construction, this must be translated by passive or autonomous one in Irish. 'He broke his leg', grammatically an active construction in English is translated in Irish as *briseadh an chos aige*, using the past autonomous form of the verb, which might be translated literally as 'the leg at him was/got broken'. The term 'subject' does not adequately describe the agent of the action, as Ó Corrain (2001) explains:

> …the so-called subject, rather than being the agent of an action is the experiencer of the process…the 'affected participant (2001, p.105).

The first three examples that Ó Nualláin provides above translate English 'pseudo-intransitives' (Ó Corráin 2001, p.117), but in Irish these require a change of voice from active to passive:

> if the human or animate entity is the experiencer rather than the agent of an action, he will often be retained in an oblique case form in Irish syntax rather than being made the grammatical subject.(2001, p.116).

The following example from *An Máirnéalach Dubh* demonstrates this exactly, where the ship or 'she', the subject of Conrad's sentence is given exactly this oblique case form, where the 'roll' that she gave' in English is translated in Irish as 'Baineadh urróg bheag aisti', literally, 'a small roll was taken out of her', using the autonomous form of the verb and the ship itself becomes the indirect object of the clause;

> She gave a slight roll, and the sleeping sails woke suddenly, coming all together with a mighty flap against the masts, then filled again one after another in a quick succession of loud reports that ran down the lofty spars, till the collapsed mainsail flew out last with a violent jerk. (*NN*, p.106)
>
> Baineadh urróg bheag aistí, agus mhusgail na seoltaí a bhí ina gcodladh, agus bhuail siad buille millteanach ar na crainn, agus líon siad. Ceann i ndiaidh an chinn eile líon siad agus rinne tormáin a tháinig anuas na maidí, go dtí gur spréidh an seól láir le síothamh millteanach. (*MD*, p.156)
>
> Un léger coup de roulis et les voiles endormies s'éveillèrent soudain pour claquer ensemble avec violence contre les mâts et s'enflèrent l'une après l'autre en une rapide succession de sonores détonations qui descendirent du haut des espars jusqu'à ce que la grand-voile dégonflée se déployât la dernière avec une secousse. *(NN*, p.601)

The French translation avoids the use of any verb, simplifying the sentence into a verbless phrase. This structure in Irish might well cause difficulty for a non-native Irish speaker, whose mother tongue is English, when translating English into Irish, and it is such translators who are Ó Nualláin's target audience here. A native Irish

speaker such as Mac Grianna, who also is fluent and highly literate in the English language, does not fall into any of these translation traps.

Ó Nualláin's next principle states that the opposite of Principle 2 also occurs, where the English passive should be translated by the active in Irish. Examples include:

'Was driven back – *gan dhé chóir chum múinte acu ach.*

'once frequented by' – *a thaithigheadh*

'her people were reckoned' - *sé deireadh muinntir Shasana leo*

'is threatened by' – *ghár gcosg ar* (1922, p.4)

An extract from *Amy Foster* illustrates the passive voice in English becoming active in Irish, where 'seen' is translated by Mac Grianna with the active '*bhíomhar'* and '*chonnaiceamar*'.

> The doctor pointed with his whip, and from the summit of the descent seen over the rolling tops of the trees in a park by the side of the road, appeared the level sea far below us, (*AF*, p.233)
>
> Shín an doctúir an fhuip. Bhíomar ar mhullach an áird, agus chonnaiceamar thar bharra crann a bhí i bpáirc ar thaobh an róid, chonnaiceamar an fhairrge chomhthrom i bhfad síos uainn. (*AF*, p.147)
>
> Du bout de son fouet, le docteur me désigna le lointain et du haut de la pente; par-dessus le sommet ondulé des arbres d'un parc-, en bordure de la route, j'aperçus la surface unie de la mer, bien au-dessous de nous, (*AF*, p.404)

The French translation in this case also uses the active '*j'aperçu*'. The sea 'appeared' in English, but 'we saw it' in Irish and 'I saw it' in French. Conrad's use of the word 'seen' is placed awkwardly in his sentence here, and the translators have taken pains to avoid it.

Mac Grianna's sentence structure includes an example of the much-maligned 'Gaeilge bhacach', or as it is sometimes called 'Gaeilge dhroimbhriste', where the verb is repeated after a long adnominal clause 'chonnaiceamar …., chonnaiceamar', which will be discussed in Chapter 4..

Fourthly, he notes that single adjectives in English must be expanded into a phrase or clause in Irish, citing examples such as:

securely – *agus gan aon bheannaic orthu*

in bitter perplexity- *bhí sé ag teip ar dhá thaobh an scéil do thabhairt dá chéile'*

timidly– *agus iarrachtín d'eagla orthu*,

all right – *ní baoghal ná go.* (1922, p.4)

The following sentence from *The Nigger of the 'Narcissus'*(NN)*/An Mairnéalach Dubh/* (*MD*) */Le Nègre du Narcisse* (*NN*) contains several examples of Ó Nualláin's principles being put into effect by Mac Grianna:

> Two young giants with smooth, baby faces — two Scandinavians — helped each other to spread their bedding, **silent**, and **smiling placidly** at the tempest of **good-humoured and meaningless** curses. (*NN*, p.17)
>
> Bhí dhá stócach óga, fathaigh as Críoch Lochlann a rabh aghaidheannaí orthú comh mín le naoidheanáin, bhí siad ag cóiriú a gcuid leabthach i gcomhar. **Ní rabh focal astú** acht **ag éisteacht go haoibheamhail** leis an eascaine **gan urchóid gan bhrigh** a bhí ina tuilidh thart orthú. (*MD*, p.8)
>
> Deux jeunes géants au visage imberbe de gosse — deux Scandinaves — s'aidaient à déplier leur literie **en silence** et **souriaient** placidement devant l'avalanche des impréca-tions bon enfant et sans portée. (*NN*, p.501)

This sentence includes examples of a single adverb or adjective being expanded into a phrase or clause by Mac Grianna – 'silent' becomes '*Ní raibh focal astu*' or 'There was not a word out of them' and 'smiling placidly' as '*ag éisteacht go haoibheamhail*' as 'listening smilingly'. 'Smooth, baby faces' is translated as '*a rabh aghaidheannaí orthú comh mín le naoidheanáin*' or 'whose faces were as smooth as babies'.

'Good-humoured and meaningless' is given as '*gan urchóid gan bhrigh'*, with repetition of the adverbial 'gan' to turn the two adjectives into a single unit (principle no. 8), demonstrated by the omission of a comma between the two. In order to create this effect, the meaning of 'good-humoured' has been transferred to 'without harm' (literally). Further examples of Mac Grianna's use of 'gan..gan…' are shown under analysis of Principle 18

His fifth principle is that epithets sometimes have to be transferred. His examples include:

rolling on the *heavy* seas – *í dá luasgadh go breagh **tromaighe** imeasg na mór-thonn,*

runaway knocks - *ag bualadh dóirse agus ag rith leo féin*'. (1922, p.5)

'*Bhí dhá stócach óg, fathaigh as Críoch Lochlann*' provides an example of a transferred epithet where the word 'giant' from the source text is transferred to be included in the nationality, reading 'Scandinavian giants', rather than 'giants - two Scandanavians.' This also occurs in the phrase 'helped each other to spread their bedding' which is rendered as '*bhí siad ag cóiriú a gcuid leabthach i gcomhar*', or 'they were making the bed in co-operation.' (literally), or 'they shared the work of making their beds'.

A further example of a transferred epithet from is as follows:

> The sun looked upon her all day, and every morning rose with a burning, round stare of **undying** curiosity. (*NN*, p.35)
>
> Bhí an ghrian **ag stánadh anuas** oirthí i rith an lae, agus ag éirghe 'ach a'n mhaidin agus amharc te dian fiosrach **go bráthach** inntí. (*MD*, p.38)
>
> Le soleil surveillait le navire à longueur de journée etchaque matin, se levait, l'oeil rond et brûlant d'une **insatiable** curiosité. (*MD*, p.521)

These sorts of transferred epithets are extremely common in Mac Grianna's translations of Conrad, and are a mark of his creativity as a writer being brought to bear on his translation work. Here, he has chosen to intensify the first part of Conrad's sentence by using '*stánadh anuas*' rather than '*amharc ar*' which would be a literal translation of Conrad. In the second sentence his choice of adjectives' *te dian fiosrach'* and the inclusion of the adverb '*go bráthach'*, again a transferred epithet (albeit adverbial), for the expression 'undying curiosity' matches, and even increases, the sense of intensity of the glaring sun created by Conrad.

The French translation has used the word 'insatiable' to translate 'undying'. Dictionary equivalents for the word 'undying' include '*éternel*', '*indéfectible'*, '*immortel*' and '*impérissable*' [53] This translation also intensifies Conrad's original, adding the meaning of 'unable to be satisfies' to Conrad's 'undying'. Both translators, it seems, wish to adequately translate and, indeed, add to that sense of burning longing that Conrad's original suggests.

[53] www./dictionary.reverso.net/french-synonyms/insatiable (26/09/18)

The sixth principle notes the necessity of omitting certain phrases from the Irish translation ‘as being unnatural, or unmeaning repetitions’ (p5). His examples are:

her *noble, graceful,* hull – *adhmad a sleasa*,

open parlour windows – *tré fhuinneogaidh párlús isteach*. (1922, p.5)

He gives other omitted phrases ‘over his threshold’, ‘to whom she had spoken’, ‘the invaders’ ‘that treaty’ ‘who were the first sailors’, ‘it is an intelligence’, ‘infallible’, ‘such knowledge’, ‘the new expression’. Ó Nualláin sounds a little exasperated by the wordiness of English when he discusses the necessity of making omissions. There are many examples of omissions from the source text in Mac Grianna’s translations of Conrad. The following is one example:

> He liked to look at it about the time of sunset; perhaps because at that time the sinking sun would spread a glowing gold tinge on the waters of the Pantai, and Almayer’s thoughts were often busy with gold; (*AIF*, p.1)
>
> B’áin leis bheith ag amharc uirthe le luighe gréine, nuair a chuireadh an ghrian dath an óir ar an uisge. B’fhéidir gur b’é an fáth a bhí le seo go mbíodh Almayer ag smuaintiughadh go minic ar ór. (*DCA*,p.5)
>
> Il aimait la regarder au coucher du soleil; peut-être parce que alors l’astre déclinant couvrait les flots de la Pantaï d’un reflet d’or luisant, et que l’or était souvent au centre des pensées d’Almayer;(*FA*, p.5)

Ó Nualláin’s word ‘unnatural’ covers a multitude of reasons why Mac Grianna would choose to omit words or phrases in translation. Many of the latter’s eighteen principles can be called on as reasons to omit words and phrases which are ‘unnatural’ – ‘logical order’, or the basic difference in syntax, relative and non-relative constructions in both languages, the necessity to transfer an epithet, can all lead to omissions from the Irish translation. These types of omissions are caused by the basic syntactic differences in the two languages. In the example above, Mac Grianna has omitted the adjective ‘glowing’, perhaps reasoning that such luminescence is an inherent quality of gold, part of the nature of a gold object is to glow, and therefore to add this adjective would be tautological and superfluous. There is a slightly puritanical strain in this attitude toward description, which echoes Ó Nualláin’s impatience.

Omission of metaphor and figurative language, particularly in the translation of creative writing can perhaps be a more serious case, where it may cause the target text to lack an important creative aspect of the source text. The following example comes from *The Nigger of the 'Narcissus'/An Mairnéalach Dubh/ /Le Nègre du Narcisse*:

> while the soft breeze, eddying down the **enormous** cavity of the foresail, that stood out **distended** above their bare heads, stirred the tumbled hair **with a touch passing and light** like an indulgent caress. (*NN*, p.37)
>
> Shil an ghaoth bhog anuas lag an tseóil a bhí spréidhte os a gceann, agus bhog sí a gcuid gruaige mar bhéadh sí ag déanamh mán-mán leo. (*MD*, p.42)
>
> tandis que la douce brise, tournoyant dans **l'énorme** creux de la voile de misaine **gonflée** au-dessus de leurs têtes nues, agitait les cheveux ébouriffés **d'un souffle fugitif et léger** comme une indulgente caresse. (*NN,* p.524)

There are several omissions in this sentence including 'enormous', 'with a touch passing and light', while the translation of 'that stood out distended above their bare heads' as *'a bhí spréidhte os a gceann'* seems inadequate. The adjective 'distended' gives a sense of unhealthy swollen bloatedness which Mac Grianna does not convey directly or indirectly in the translation. The Irish words *ata* or *borrtha* might have been used here by Mac Grianna. It is this kind of descriptive English, typical of the late nineteenth century, which Ó Nualláin also finds 'unnatural' to the Irish language. In the case of a creative writer such as Conrad, we will find fewer of Ó Nualláin's 'unmeaning repetitions', since every word is carefully weighed up and considered by the author, although Conrad's prolix style has been criticised by reviewers[54]. However, to balance such omissions, there is, within this extract, an example of Mac Grianna's discriminating accuracy in his use of the expression *ag déanamh mán-mán*[55] which carries the meaning of an 'indulgent caress' (as in patting a dog, for example, or cuddling a child) and fully and idiomatically translates Conrad's ''like an indulgent caress', compensating more than adequately for the loss of 'with a touch passing and light.'

Conversely, Ó Nualláin' seventh principle notes that words not in the English source text must be inserted into the Irish text 'to complete the sense or make the logical argument clear' (1922, p.5). His examples are:

[54] This aspect of Conrad's style will be discussed in Chapter 4.
[55] *FGB*, (1977) p.827.

But… there was also' – *dob' iongtach an radharc é; ba ghadh san*. (1922, p.5).

and also:

> *agus is iad comharthaí is gnáth a bheith uirthi* - this phrase is inserted into the English text 'in order to make the logical connection clear (1922, p.5).

In the above examples he inserts extra words and phrases in order adequately to translate the sample extracts for translation in the book. This is difficult to search for on *Tobar na Gaedhilge*. The following is a good example:

> In all that crowd of cold and hungry men, waiting wearily for a violent death, not a voice was heard; they were mute, and in sombre thoughfulness listened to the horrible imprecations of the gale. (*NN*, p.59)
>
> Ní raibh aon duine amháin ag cainnt, den sgaifte fhuar ocrach; bhí siad ag fanacht go tuirseach le an-bhás, agus ag éisteacht go gruamdha leis an easgaine uathbhásach a bhí ag an ghaoth mhór **i n-a dtimcheall**.(*MD*, p.78)
>
> Dans toute cette troupe d'hommes transis et affamés, qui attendaient avec lassitude une mort violente, on n'entendit aucune voix; ils restaient muets et, sombrement pensifs, écoutaient les horribles imprécations de la tempête. (*NN*, p.548)

Ó Nualláin's principle seems idiosyncratic and perhaps he is being a little over-fastidious on this point: he is endeavouring to show that it is important to make the Irish translation flow with a natural style that would be used by native speakers, in other words, in this principle, as in all of his principles, he is advocating his mentor, Peadar Ua Laoghaire's, dictum of *caint an ndaoine*.

Ó Nualláin, in his next principle (the eighth), observes that an adverb qualifying an adjective will be rendered in Irish ('as in Latin' (1922, p.6)) by two synonymous adjectives. His examples are:

> unspeakably dreadful - *ba thruagh agus ba nimhneach*,
>
> extremely interesting – *ba mhóran an nidh é agus ba mhaith*,
>
> how very easily - *a bhuige agus a shaoráidighe* (Séadna)

An example of this has already been seen in *"gan urchóid gan bhrigh'*. This is a commonly-ocurring adjectival form in Irish, and it is used extensively by MacGrianna in his translations of Conrad. In the following example, Mac Grianna choses to employ it instead of Conrad's 'without …or', construction which is also used in the

French translation. Mac Grianna demonstrates his innate understanding of Irish here, as well as his creative bent in providing the rhythm of repetition, where he simply could have followed Conrad in using '*gan…ná'*.

> On going out he had to stand aside, and Captain MacWhirr strode over the doorstep **without saying a word or making a sign.** (*T,* p.169)
>
> Ag dul amach dó b'éigean dó seasamh i leath-taoibh, agus tháinig an Caiftín Mac Furra isteach thar an táirsigh **gan** focal **gan** comhartha. (*SB*, p.40)
>
> En sortant, il dut s'effacer pour laisser passer le capitaine Mac Whirr; celui-ci franchit le seuil de la porte **sans** dire un mot, **ni** faire un signe. (*T,* p.333)

Further examples of two related nouns, in these cases, using 'gan', in place of one adjective in Conrad include the following:

> Jukes, exasperated by this **unprovoked** attack, broke the needle at the second stitch, and dropping his work got up and cursed the heat in a violent undertone. (*T*, p.165)
>
> Chuir an ionnsuighe a rinneadh air **gan fáth gan siocair** Jukes, ins na céidéagaí, agus an dara greim a d'fhuaigh sé bhris sé an tsnáthad. Chaith sé uaidh na gnoithe agus leig rois mhillteanach mhallacht ar an teas faoi n-a anáil (*SB*, p.32)
>
> Jukes, exaspéré par cette sortie **immotivée**, cassa son aiguille au second point, laissa tomber son travail et se leva, en grommelant des imprécations contre cette maudite chaleur. (*T*, p.329)

The adjective 'unprovoked' has a strong semantic range, indicating the innocence and, especially, the passivity of Jukes, his blamelessness in causing the attack. Neither adjective in Irish, nor the French translation '*inmotivée*', have this same connotation of the passive receiver's passivity, as it were, and the French translation, arguably, does not fully bring out these undertones. Mac Grianna's adjectives do not convey this passivity either, but his inclusion of '*a rinneadh air*', using the autonomous tense, conveys a sense of Jukes' passivity. His repetition of synonyms after '*gan*' intensifies their meaning, as well as supplying rhythm, bringing a strength and emphasis to the senselessness of the attack that the French *'immotivée'* lacks.

The following example echoes the alliteration of 'inarticulate and indispensable' although this is not the phrase that Mac Grianna is translating with 'gan…gan':

> Their generation lived inarticulate and indispensable, **without knowing the sweetness of affections or the refuge of a home** — and died free from the dark menace of a narrow grave. (*NN*, p.32)
>
> Mhair an ghlún fear sin **gan ghrádh gan bhaile**; má bhí siad balbh féin bhéadh an cineadh daonna bacach gan iad; agus fuair siad bás agus gan baoghal daobhtha go rachadh siad in uaigh a bhéadh ró-chumhang. (*MD,* p.33)
>
> Leur génération vivait muette et indispensable**, sans connaître les douceurs de l'affection ou le refuge d'un foyer** — et mourait libre de la sombre menace d'une tombe étroite. (*NN*, p.518)

He translates the adjective with a clause: 'má bhí siad balbh féin bhéadh an cineadh daonna bacach gan iad:' '*gan grádh gan bhail*e' is a concise and terse translation of Conrad's rather more verbose, sentimental 'without knowing the sweetness of affections or the refuge of a home'. Ua Laoghaire and Ó Nualláin's recommendations are here being carried out by Mac Grianna in that he eschews what Ua Laoghaire describes as 'the English *froth'* and 'that oozy stuff' from his translation.

The following example also translates an entire phrase with the more compact '*gan…gan*..'. There is also the same usage of repetition using '*go*', instead of '*gan*', in '*go huaigneach, go héagcorrach'*, where both adjectives following 'go' begin with a vowel and are therefore both prefixed by 'h', providing a further alliterative effect. Allowing for syncopation in '*éagcorrach*', all four adjectives consist of two syllables. Bringing two 'go' forms together with two '*gan'* forms creates alliteration four times. The first two examples also end in '-(e)*ach*', adding again to the symmetry and alliteration within the words:

> 'Let's hope so!' it cried — **small, lonely and unmoved, a stranger to the visions of hope or fear**; and it flickered into disconnected words: 'Ship… This… Never — Anyhow… for the best.' (*T,* p.185)
>
> 'Bímid ag dúil leis!' a sgairt sé, **go huaigneach, go héagcorrach**, **gan dóchas gan eagla**; agus annsin sgab sé 'na chorr-fhocla: 'Long… Seo… Go bráthach… ar scor ar bith… leis an rud is fearr.' (*SB*, p.67)
>
> — Faut l'espérer, criait **l'imperturbable filet de voix solitaire mais** qui semblait elle-même **étrangère à l'espérance ou à la crainte**. Puis s'égrenèrent des mots sans suite: — Vaisseau… ça… jamais… en tout cas… pour le mieux. (*T*, p.351)

In ‘Teanga Mháire’ (1992), Ó Corráin points to four characteristics of the Irish language story-telling tradition - ‘*simplíocht chomhréire’*, ‘*rithim láidir’* ‘*siméadracht nó comhcruthaíocht’*, and ‘*tráthúlach*t’ (1992, p.95). Ó Corráin here is examining the influence of this tradition on the writer ‘Máire’ (Séamus Ó Grianna), Mac Grianna’s brother. In this piece of translating, MacGrianna demonstrates the same influences and employs all four of these characteristics in his translation. He simplifies Conrad’s syntax in the second half of the phrase, by replacing a clause with two adjectival phrases: he creates a strong rhythm which simply does not exist in Conrad: he provides symmetry, effectively dividing the phrase into two sections, ‘*go*’ and ‘*gan*’ respectively while connecting them by the alliteration of the ‘g’ sound: he creates concision from Conrad’s verbosity and provides the *mots justes* to recreate ‘equivalent effect’ in the Irish language from the original English, exemplifying Ó Corráin’s definition ‘níl aon focal iontu ach an focal atá tráthúil fóirsteanach’ (1992, p.95).

Another example replaces past participle and adjective with two adjectives following ‘gan’:

> He had **completely collapsed** now. (*NN*, p.66)
>
> Bhí sé **gan bhrigh gan chámhall** an t-am seo. (*MD,* p.90)
>
> Il s’était **totalement écroulé** maintenant. (*NN*, p.556)

The following examples have repetition of *gan* without intervening connector such as ‘or’ or ‘and’:

> Ag dul amach dó b’éigean dó seasamh i leath-taoibh, agus tháinig an Caiftín Mac Furra isteach thar an táirsigh **gan focal gan comhartha**. (*SB*, p.40)
>
> On going out he had to stand aside, and Captain MacWhirr strode over the doorstep **without saying a word or making a sign**. (*T*, p.169)
>
> En sortant, il dut s’effacer pour laisser passer le capitaine Mac Whirr; celui-ci franchit le seuil de la porte **sans dire un mot, ni faire un signe.** (*T*, p.333)

In the following example, Mac Grianna uses *gan… gan* to translate two negative adjectives ‘irresolute and unhappy’. This usage is a standard one in the Irish language, but here the repetition without a connecting ‘and’ lends strength and rhythm, which is different from Conrad’s usage - his trailing list reflects the weak

nature of the character, while Mac Grianna's captures Conrad's dismissive attitude towards him:

> And now she had lived on the river for three years with savage mother and a father walking about amongst pitfalls, with his head in the clouds, weak, **irresolute, and unhappy.** (*AlF*, p.26)
>
> Agus bhí sí anois trí bliadhna i n-a comhnaidhe 'e chois na h-abhann, agus máthair fhiadhain aice, agus athair a bhí ag dul thart imeasg phoill chontabhairteacha agus a cheann san aer — bhí, fear lag, **gan toil, gan suaimhneas intinne**. (*DCA*, p.58)
>
> Et maintenant elle vivait depuis trois ans sur la rivière avec une mère sauvage et un père qui circulait entre des pièges, la tête dans les nuages, faible, **indécis et malheureux.** (*FA*, p.38)

In the following example, where Mac Grianna employs *gan…gan...* to translate Conrad's 'in an aimless, idle way', a similar pattern has been employed in the French translation, where *sans…sans…* is used.

> His mind became concentrated upon himself in an **aimless, idle** way, and when something pushed lightly at the back of his knees he nearly, as the saying is, jumped out of his skin. (*T*, p.186)
>
> Thionntuigh sé a umhail air féin i ndóigh **gan bhrigh gan iarraidh,** agus nuair a mhothuigh sé rud ag brúghadh na n-iosgad go héadtrom aige, d'fhág an croidhe a áit aige. (*SB*, p.68)
>
> Son esprit était à ce point replié sur soi-même, — et cela **sans but, sans propos** —, que lorsque quelque chose vint lui toucher légèrement les genoux par-derrière, il pensa bondir hors de sa peau, comme on dit (*T*, p.352)

A further example shows Mac Grianna using the repetition of '*gan*' to compensate for the lack of the indefinite article, to pick up on the repetition of the indefinite article used by both Conrad in English as well as in the French translation. Mac Grianna dispenses with the 'or' of the English, preferring to maintain the Irish convention of omitting any connecting conjunction in such a series. This strengthens the effect of the series of negative adjectives, giving added emphasis to the sense of utter hopelessness that Conrad is attempting to create.

> It seemed so unreasonable, so humiliating to be flung there in that settlement and to see the days rush by into the past, **without a hope, a desire, or an aim** that would justify the life she had to endure in ever-growing weariness. (*AlF*, p.151)
>
> Dar léithe nach rabh ciall leis, dar léithe go rabh sé náireach aice a bheith caithte annsin san áit sin, agus na laethe ag dul thart, **gan dóchas, gan**

> **mhian, gan iarraidh**, a chuirfeadh brigh ins an tsaoghal a rabh sí tuirseach de. (*DCA*, p.209)
>
> Il paraissait si déraisonnable, si humiliant d'avoir été jetée là dans cet établissement et de voir le flot rapide des jours sombrer dans le passé **sans un espoir, un désir ou une ambition** pour justifier l'existence qu'il lui fallait supporter avec une lassitude toujours croissante. (*FA*, p.131)

And similarly, in the following:

> The face was a blank, **without a sign of emotion, feeling, reason, or even knowledge of itself**. (*AIF*, p.122)
>
> Bhí an aghaidh folamh**, gan mhothughadh, gan chéill, gan eólas**. (*DCA*, p.260)
>
> Le visage était vide, **sans une trace d'émotion, de sentiment, de raison ou même de conscience de soi.** (*FA*, p.163)

In the example cited above, Mac Grianna omits the final 'or even knowledge of itself', echoing Ó Nuallain's sixth principle of omitting certain word and phrases because they are 'unnatural or unmeaning repetitions'. Mac Grianna seems to believe that the semantic range of the word *eolas* incorporates both meanings - 'reason' and 'knowledge of itself'. Its omission certainly leaves the translation with a customary rhythmic terseness that enhances Conrad's deliberately bald description of the blank face, drained of all emotion and expressiveness. Mac Grianna effectively employs this characteristic trait in Irish of emphasising and strengthening adjectival meaning by the use of two synonyms in apposition, without an intervening connecting word such as 'and'. Two such synonyms create an emphatic descriptive unit, often alliterative and often corresponding in the number of their syllables, (*briste brúite*, for example). As we have seen, when Mac Grianna chooses to expand this practice to three adjectives, he enlarges and develops what is a common linguistice practice within the language in an expressive and creative way, demonstrating his writerly sensitivity to both languages.

Ó Nualláin's ninth principle reveals instances where the English relative construction becomes non-relative in Irish. Ó Nualláin's examples include:

> who could not be given - *ach ní raibh ar chumus éinne an chabhair sin a thabhairt dúinn,*
>
> who were giving the finishing touches – *agus... chríochnuighthe acu, nach mór*, (1922, p.6)

A more telling example of this can be found later in Ó Nualláin's book, where the following (opening) sentence of a passage from *A Munster Twilight* is to be translated:

> When Eoghan Mor O'Donovan, poet, stooped down and came in over his threshold he saw, in spite of the gloom, that his son Diarmuid, who all day long had been with him leading the plough at the ploughing, had eaten his evening meal of potatoes and milk, and in his exhaustion had leant his head down the deal table and fallen asleep. (1922, p.32).

Ó Nualláin's assessment of this sentence is as follows:

> The first sentence here is very clumsy and complicated. Irish will state the events simply and clearly, each in its proper place… get rid of the relative construction and mention the various facts according to time sequence:- leading the cow, coming home, eating his supper, leaning head, falling asleep (1922, p.32).

He translates the sentence thus:

> File ab eadh Eoghan Mór Ó Donnabháin. Ach má b'eadh b'éigean dó bheith ag obair. Bhí an lá áirithe seo go léir caithte aige ag treabhadh, agus Diarmuid, a mhac, ag cabhrú leis, ag treorú na bó. I ndeire an lae do chuaidh Diarmuid isteach, d'ith sé a chuid prátaí, agus d'ól a chuid báinne, agus le neart túirse do chrom sé a cheann ar an mbórd giúmhaise, agus thuit a chodladh air. (1922, p.33)

Whether one agrees or not with Ó Nualláin's characterising of the English sentence as 'clumsy', it is certainly grammatically complex and the succession of clauses that depend on the name of the character 'Diarmuid' as their subject highlights the difficulties that the major syntactical difference in the two languages (subject, verb, object (SVO) versus verb, subject, object (VSO)) entail for the translator**.** In this case it involves the breaking up of the single sentence into three sentences. However, it is (according to Ó Nualláin) the stating of events 'simply and clearly, each in its proper place', where the change in tone of the two pieces comes to the fore. In the first instance, Ó Nualláin, with the sentence '*Ach má b'eadh b'éigean dó bheith ag obair'*, places emphasis on the fact that, despite being a poet, O'Donovan has to work the land to make a living. This emphasis does not exist in the original text, where the fact is condensed into one word 'poet', placed strategically after O'Donovan's name – in fact, his profession is simply alluded to, so perhaps this may be an example of English being 'allusive' (the first principle). It is as if Ó Nualláin feels that the reader would be unwilling to accept that a poet might have another job

as well as the composition of poetry and that some explanation of this phenomenon is required. He discusses his dissatisfaction with this aspect of the sentence:

> 'Begin by stating that Ó Donovan was a poet. One may ask, however, why this statement is made at all. There seems to be no point in it, unless it be to mark the contrast between his aspirations and his actual lot.' (1922, p.32)

That may well be the point of the statement, but Ó Nualláin clearly does not find the illustration of such a contrast to be a legitimate, or even simply an interesting observation on the writer's part. It does seem that this is an example of what Ó Nualláin terms the 'allusiveness' of English, which must be countered by the 'concreteness' of Irish. He certainly deals with this single word in a very concrete and explanatory way, making two sentences in Irish out of one word in English:

> File ab eadh Eoghan Mór Ó Donnabháin. Ach má b'eadh b'éigean dó bheith ag obair'. (1922, p.33)

In the following example from *The Nigger of the* 'Narcissus'/*An Máirnéalach Dubh*/*Le Nègre du Narcisse*, we find an example:

> Beside them the short, **dumpy** sailmaker — who had been in the Navy — related, between the whiffs of his pipe, impossible stories about Admirals (*MD*, p.37)
>
> Bhí fear dhéanta na seóltach ag n-a dtaoibh, ina **dhunndalán** ghoirid: bhí sé 'sa Chabhlach Cogaidh roimhe siud agus bhí sé ag caitheamh tobaca agus ag innse staireannaí áidhbhéalacha ar cheannphoirt mara. (*NN*, p.41)
>
> À côté d'eux le maître voilier, petit et **trapu** — qui avait servi dans la marine de guerre — racontait, entre deux bouffées de sa pipe, d'incroyables histoires sur les amiraux**.** (*NN*, p.523)

Mac Grianna does not choose to translate the relative clause – who had been in the Navy - but begins a new clause after a colon. This is a result of Irish syntax where VSO word order requires the verb at the beginning of the sentence and the resulting repetition of 'bhí' gives a storytelling rhythm to the sentences. This example is also unusual in that it is longer than the sentence in the source text: it is a compound sentence, comprising two short sentences connected by a colon and a further clause connected by '*agus*'. Conrad's more complex sentence has a concision that is denied to Irish by its syntax. Mac Grianna also has to expand the sentence in other ways: '*fear dhéanta na seóltach'* replaces 'sailmaker' and the two adjectives 'short, dumpy' have been expanded to a noun phrase '*ina dhunndalán ghoirid'*. These

'expansions' are in fact examples of Mac Grianna's ability to select the *mot juste* in Irish in order to provide the most apt lexical formation from Irish in order to fully translate Conrad's English. The noun '*dunndalán*' is a noun meaning 'a short dumpy man'. One noun in Irish here holds the meaning of three English words, two adjectives and a noun. The semantic range of one word in this semantic area in Irish extends beyond its English equivalent.

The tenth principal is the reverse of number 9, where the English non-relative construction becomes relative in Irish. Examples include:

> containing – '*na raibh*,
>
> in writing' – *nuair a bhí daoine ag cur síos ar*,
>
> liable to – *a chaithfeadh géilleadh*, and in a double relative construction;
>
> it's the people who know least that talk most – *na daoine is lugha eolus is iad is mó a labhrann.* (1922, p.7)

In the following example from *The Nigger of the 'Narcissus'/An Máirnéalach Dubh*/*Le Nègre du Narcisse* Mac Grianna has translated 'aquatic' as 'a bhéadh geallmhar ar an uisce' which does seem an unusual way to translate 'aquatic' – he could have used 'uisciúil'[56], 'uisceach'[57], or simply 'uisce', as a nominal genitive used adjectivally. Mac Grianna might here be attempting to replicate the mordant humour of the source text.

> She resembled an enormous and **aquatic** blackbeetle, surprised by the light, overwhelmed by the sunshine, trying to escape with ineffectual effort into the distant gloom of the land. (*NN*, p.33)
>
> Bhí sí cosamhail le daol mór dubh, **a bhéadh geallmhar ar an uisge,** agus a dtiocfadh an ghrian go tobann air, agus a bhéadh ag iarraidh imtheacht oirthí isteach ar scáth an talaimh. (*MD*, p.35)
>
> On aurait dit un énorme cafard **aquatique**, surpris par la lumière et écrasé par le soleil, qui, en de vains efforts, aurait tenté de trouver refuge dans l'ombre lointaine de la côte. (*NN*, p.520)

[56] *'uisciúil'* is given in de Bhaldraithe's *English-Irish Dictionary* p.31 for 'aquatic', although a more common translation might be 'watery'.
[57] *New English Irish Dctionary* (online) and *FGB* (p.1300) both give this to translate 'aquatic'.

The eleventh principle is that of changing the sequence of clauses or sentences to provide the logical sequence that may be absent from English. According to Ó Nualláin, 'Irish loves logical order: English is sometimes whimsically illogical' (p7). His examples include many cases of where sentences are tranposed in the English and Irish versions. This logical order is explained by him in one example: 'The English tells us that he 'watched' the boys and girls and then that the boys and girls 'were there'. Irish, more naturally, tells us that they were there and that he watched them!' (p16). The sentences in question are as follows:

> …watching, as I waited, a group of boys and girls who were skating gaily on the ice-covered river hard by…' - *Tá abha in-aice na ceardchan, agus bhí scata buachaillí is cailíní ag sleamhnú go meidhreach ar an lic-oidhre. Do chuadhar ag féachaint orthu* (1922, p.17)

In a note to the text he remarks 'Note that the clause 'as I waited' is not translated. It is only an artificial repetition of the idea involved in 'while the smith was engaged.' (1922, p.17)

The following sentence from *The Nigger of the 'Narcissus'/An Máirnéalach Dubh*/*Le Nègre du Narcisse* provides an example of where, as Ó Nuallián puts it 'Irish loves logical order.' Mac Grianna here has completely reversed the 'logical order' of Conrad's sentence and brought the act of whispering to the beginning of the sentence, compensating by augmenting the description of the moustache, with the emphatic 'agus bhí sin air'.

> Hidden by the white moustache, his lips, stained with tobacco-juice that trickled down the long beard, moved in inward whisper. (*NN*, p.18)
>
> Bhí sé ag cogarnaigh astoigh san fhéasóig, *agus bhí sin air* (my italics), féasóg fhada liath a bhí ag folach a bhéil agus stáid de shugh tobaca inntí. (*MD*, p.10)
>
> Cachées par la moustache blanche, ses lèvres tachées par le jus de tabac qui dégoulinait dans sa longue barbe remuaient comme en un murmure intérieur. (*NN*, p.502)

The more complex question here is why this 'logical order' is necessary in Irish? Ó Nualláin's own example places the facts in sequence by providing two short sentences which eschew the relative clause in the English ('who were skating') and the progressive phrase 'watching' whereas Mac Grianna reverses the order of the English sentence.

Ó Nualláin's twelfth principle deals with what he describes as 'differences of colour and tone' (pt) in the two languages, asserting that 'Irish is sometimes *less highly coloured*.' (p7). He does not give any further explanation of this claim, but illustrates it with a raft of examples, which include:

without *taking this precaution*' – *in' éaghmais sin*, (1922, p.7)

that he was *master* of' – *a bhí ar fheabhas aige*,

his Majesty' – *an rí*,

putting the *finishing touches* to – *e críochnuighthe acu, nach mór*. (1922, p.8)

His choice of translation of 'finishing touches' is worthy of note, as he chooses not to use the common Irish expression *an dlaoi mhullaigh*, which usually translates the English in Ulster Irish. His assertion that Irish is 'less highly coloured' is contradicted by the intensely idiomatic nature of this figurative expression, a metaphor which originates in the craft of roof-thatching, and which may be unique to the Irish language without exact equivalent, as it refers to the last stage of the thatching process. [58] In this case it could be argued that the Irish provides a more 'highly coloured' equivalent than that of English, which, while an idiomatic phrase, does not have the cultural allusions tied up in the Irish *an dlaoi mhullaigh*.

He then gives examples of occasions where Irish is 'more highly coloured' than English. Examples of this include:

rawness of a lower class – *iad gan léigheann gan lághacht gan tuiscint*,

the greater delicacy and spirituality – *an blas úd ar áilneacht agus ar uaisleacht agus ar spioradáltacht*,

as she went over to starboard - *nuair a luaisgtí í deiseal le truime nirt na gaoithe* (1922, p.8)

The thirteenth principle describes English as '*allusive'* (p8) whereas Irish is '*direct*'. Ó Nualláin gives no definition of either of these terms: directness is perhaps self-explanatory – allusiveness is, however, a rather more elusive quality to identify

[58]An online dictionary search revelas 'la touche finale' for French 'toques finales/últimos retoques' for Spanish, 'tocco finale/ultimo rittochi' in Itialian, and 'letzne Schlif' in German.

in a language. Dictionary definitions range from ‘indirect’ to ‘having reference to something implied or inferred; containing, abounding in, or characterized by allusions’ (https://www.dictionary.com/). Some of Ó Nualláin’s examples include:

struggled – *do dhein …iaracht ar a ghreim do bhogadh*

the vast hotel - *tigh ósta mór…ab eadh é*

opportunity - *breith…ar* (1922, p.8)

It is difficult to see how an expression like ‘the vast hotel’ can truly be described as allusive, as it seems to consist of a simple noun qualified by an adjective.

The fourteenth stipulates that ‘Irish is fond of *the concrete*, where English frequently has *the abstract*’ (p8). Examples include:

various degrees of narrowness – *cuid acu níba cumhainge ná a chéille*

produced the immediate accession – *ghluaisidís láithreach in aonfheacht linn i dteannta na cod’ eile’*

in the absence of evidence to the contrary – *nuair ná raibh aon eolus a mbréagnaithe*

reflect the popular belief – *gurb eadh is dóichighe-de gurbh sin éa chreideadh na ndaoine*

the subject of your own applause – *más duine féin a mholann é*

the excellencies of full-bodied narrative – *innsint a chur air a bheadh ar fheabhas agus ar áilneacht agus ar chruinnead*

the onward sweep of events - *gníomh á dhéanamh i ndiaidh gnímh* (1922, p.8)

Translating the abstract into more concrete Irish is one of biggest challenges facing Mac Grianna in translating Conrad’s work. Conrad’s style typically employs many

abstract forms, such as use of the passive rather than the active and descriptive forms such as the use of long lists of adjectives.[59]

The fifteenth and sixteenth of Ó Nualláin's principles discuss tense, specifically the rendering of the English perfect and pluperfect with the Irish simple past and the tendency in Irish to employ the progressive tense to translate the simple present tense in English.

O Nualláin's examples of the Irish simple past rendering the English perfect or pluperfect include

he had left – *as a dtáinig sé*,

and he points in particular to an example from *Séadhna* –

> *áit ina raibh an t-Aingeal* – 'in the spot where the Angel *had been* (he was there no longer)' (1922, p.8)

The following is an example of simple past translating the pluperfect in English from *Almayer's Folly/Dith Chéille Almayer*/*La Folie Almayer*:

> **she had been fighting** desperately like the rest of them on board the prau, and was only prevented from leaping overboard, like the few other survivors, by a severe wound in the leg. (*AlF*, p12)
>
> **Ach bhí sí ag troid mar dhuine,** agus rachadh sí 'e léim thar an taoibh mar rinne cibé a bhí beó, ach gur b'é go rabh a cos loitthe go trom. (*DCA*, p.31)
>
> **elle s'était battue** désespérément comme tous les autres occupants de la prao et que, sans une grave blessure à la jambe, elle aurait sauté par-dessus bord avec les rares autres survivants. (*FA*, p.20)

In his sixteenth principle, Ó Nualláin discusses the use of the progressive tense in Irish. His examples of progressive usage include:

to proceed - *bheith ag gluaiseacht*,

she began to grow fat – *bhí si ag tosnú ar dhul i raimhre*

[59] See Chapter 4, 'The Challenges of Conrad's Style', for a more detailed exploration of this aspect of Conrad's style.

> the priest's business is to pray – *is é gnó an tsagairt bheith ag cur a ghuidhe suas* an 'it was no wonder that they act thus'- *níorbh aon iongna iad ghá dhéanamhsan* (1922, p.10)

There are many examples of progessive use by Mac Grainna to translate the simple past. *An Máirnéalach Dubh* contains about 13% more progressive forms than its source text. This reflects the tendency of Irish to use progressive forms to express aspect, or the internal tense of sentences, with the progressive, a tendency which is much more marked than in English[60]. The following is one of many examples in *The Nigger of the 'Narcissus'An Máirnéalach Dubh*/*Le Nègre du Narcisse:*

> Aft, on the high poop, Mr. Baker walked shuffling, **grunted** to himself in the pauses of his thoughts. (*NN*, p.35)
>
> **Bhí** Mr. Baker thiar ar an droichead, **ag gnúsachtaigh** leis féin. (*MD,* p.37)
>
> À l'arrière, sur le haut de la dunette, M. Baker traînait les pieds et **grognait** à part lui entre deux pensées (*NN*, p.521)

The seventeenth principle examines the subjectivity of English versus what Ó Nualláin perceives as the objective view of Irish. He states:

> In many cases where English presents the subjective view of the writer, in the 1st person, Irish prefers to state the fact objectively, without explicit reference to the author of the opinion in question (1922, p.10).

His examples include:

> We have thus the singular spectacle – *ba greanmhar an scéal é*
>
> we have seen the conflict – *do dhéin muinntir Bh'l Áth Cliath*
>
> of whose achievements we are all so justly proud – *is éachtach agus is iongantach an t-eolas do fuarthar ar an ealadhain sin* (1922, p.10)

Ó Nualláin here seems to be referring to the use of the first person plural 'we' when it is used as a sort of objective collective term in English, where a unknown collection of implied persons such as 'the English', or 'the nation' are referred to in an oblique

[60] There is further discussion of this in Chapter 4.

manner, as demonstrated by Ó Nualláin examples. Ó Nualláin seems to interpret this form as referring to a specific rather than unspecified group, but certainly, in Irish, the use of the first person plural 'sinn' or 'muid' would refer to a specific group. To translate the pronoun directly in this way would be an example of 'béarlachas', or the perceived pejorative effect on the Irish language from the influence of the English language.

Examples of this usage are rare in the Conrad stories as they are usually in a first or third person narrative, and first person plural pronouns usually refer to a specific collection of individuals, the crew of the *'Narcissus'*, for example. One example from *Amy Foster* (AF) *Amy Foster*is as follows:

> Ascending along this road, you open a valley broad and shallow (*AF*, p.228)
>
> An té a rachas suas an bealach, casfar isteach i ngleann leathan tanaidhe é (*AF*, p.140)
>
> En montant cette route, on découvre une large vallée peu profonde (*AF*, p.400)

Here Conrad employs the objective form of the third person 'you' which corresponds to the use of 'one' in English, but which is less formal in tone. Mac Grianna's translation uses the indefinite form '*an* té', which might be translated as 'the person', or 'anybody, and thus preserves the objective third person form in his translation, and does not fall into the 'trap' of *Béarlachas*.

Finally the eighteenth principle notes the distinctive nature of idiom in the two languages, citing an example where the English 'he *managed* to fall on his feet' is translated as *do thug Dia dhó gur ghaibh sé a bhuinn* (1922, p.11). For Ó Nualláin this form of idiom in Irish 'is only one of many instances in which the Irish faith in God, and consciousness of His presence and His providence, are exemplified in the language' (1922, p.11). He mentions this belief again in his autobiography *Beatha Duine a Thoil*:

> 'Teanga Chatoiliceach is eadh an Ghaoluinn muna b'ionnann is an Béarla. Luaidhtear ainm Dé go minic sa chaint choitchianta agus bíonn urraim agus oirmhidin ag an gcainnteoir do'n ainm oirdhearc san.' (1950, p.68)

Ó Nualláin is confusing the language with the people in this case: the population of Ireland was and is overwhelmingly of the Catholic religion, and the Irish language reflects the fact that Ireland has been Christian since the fifth century and with a majority Catholic population since the time of the Reformation.

Here again, he warns against literal translation, citing the example of the English expression 'to fall on one's feet', which has a metaphorical rather than literal meaning, which would be the opposite of '*tuitim ar a chosaibh'.* Ó Nualláin here is aiming his remarks at the learner of Irish who wishes to translate and for whom literal translations may constitute a genuine pitfall. Mac Grianna, not only a native speaker of Irish and truly bi-lingual in Irish and English, but a highly gifted creative writer, does not fall into these liguistic traps.

The other principles created by Ó Nualláin, which are described by him in abstract terms, such as 'the concrete', and 'allusiveness', as well as his stipulations on metaphor, are less straightforward and require further examination. His terms are abstract and arbitrary, and seem at times to contradict one another. The twelfth and thirteenth principles describe how English is at times more 'highly coloured' than Irish and at other times, conversely, Irish is more 'highly coloured' than English. He does not define his term 'highly coloured' and therefore it must be inferred that his meaning is the common interpretation of the expression. Oxford [61]dictionaries give 'imbued with an emotive or exaggerated quality'. The definition gives us the element of exaggeration, which is a matter of personal interpretation in these examples from Ó Nualláin himself, translating from English to Irish: 'utmost beauty' as '*ar áilneacht an domhain*' and 'generation after generation' as '*na seacht sleachta*.' (1922, p.8). His examples of Irish to English are many: 'flaming sword' as '*claidheamh nochtaithe'*: 'lost in the distant clouds' (1922, p.8) as '*na scamaill úd i bhfad uaidh is fútha san thíos a bhíodar'* (1922, p.7) among them.

Conclusion

Ó Nualláin's principles, influenced as they are by Ua Laoghaire, and in no small measure by his own experience of translating, shed light on the difficulties which translation from English to Irish poses for translators. Although his

[61] https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/(26/09/18)

explanations of some of his principles at times lack clarity, particulary in the difficult area of figurative and poetic language, they illustrate clearly the prevailing thought with regard to the 'do's and don'ts' of translation which would have strongly influenced all writers and translators of the time, and indeed An Gúm's guidance in translation to the translators of the *Scéim Aistriúcháin*. These principles do give a great deal of leeway to the translator: in their support of what would now be termed the 'descriptive' emphasis on the target language (in this case, Irish), they can be seen as pre-figuring the championing of the target language (often the minority language, as with the Irish language) in modern descriptive translation theory. It is an interesting irony to see the 'prescriptivism' of Ó Nualláin's principles applied in this 'descriptive' way. Mac Grianna's translations bear out the precepts of Ua Laoghaire and his disciple Ó Nualláin: he translates in the *caint na ndaoine* style advocated by them, and, as I have demonstrated, there are many examples of Ó Nualláin's principles for translating Irish in this way in his translations of Conrad. There are also examples of where this style of translation has taken him to a level of creativity which is merited by the quality of Conrad's writing and, it might be hypothesised, that Mac Grianna's translations at times match Conrad for literary quality. This creativity on Mac Grianna's part will be examined in the next chapter.

Chapter 3: Mac Grianna's Creativity

Introduction – Creativity of the Translator

Creativity and originality are words that can often be used synonymously and yet they describe two connected but diverging concepts. Creativity can be seen as a result of being derivative, but of bringing the derived elements together in an innovative way. Originality has not always been the *sine qua non* of creative writing and translation, as Hervouet (1990) points out:

> 'The current passion for originality is a modern attitude only 200 years old and our perception of Conrad's practice might benefit from being seen in a larger historical perspective. 'The writers of antiquity' Alexander Lindey writes, 'deemed innovation hazardous, and imitation both necessary and laudable'[62] Imitation was recognised as a literary method, in particular as a method of perfecting one's own style by composing detailed imitations from one or more models.' (Hervouet, 1990, p.227)

Baker questions the notion that the work of a translator should be considered derivative, or merely a poor copy of the source text:

> …translation has traditionally been viewed as a derivative rather than creative activity. The implication is that a translator cannot have, indeed *should not have* a style of his or her own, the translator's task being simply to reproduce as closely as possible the style of the original. We may well want to question the feasibility of these assumptions, given that it is as impossible to produce a stretch of language in a totally impersonal way as it is to handle an object without leaving one's fingerprints on it.' (Baker, 2000 p.244)

In recent years translations studies has moved beyond the study of translation at the level of language to take into consideration its wider historical and political context, and to examine it in the light of modern theory, including post-colonial, femininist and gender studies Translation studies at the level of language itself, and studies of the work of the translator have come to seem out-moded and inadequate in the search to contextualise and locate translation within a wider historico-political background. These studies have not really taken into account the level of creativity that is required from a translator and how the creative language of the source text can impact upon the level of creativity that can be found in the original.

[62] Taken from Lindey, A. (1974) *Plagiarism and Originality,* Westport, Connecticut, Greenwood Press

The previous chapter has examined how Mac Grianna's Conrad translations have illustrated to a greater or lesser extent Ó Nualláin's 18 principles of translation, and how Mac Grianna's translations bear them out, revealing the dichotomies of translation. It is also clear that in many cases he transcended those principles by his astonishing creativity within the translation. That Mac Grianna translated a writer such as Conrad, whose work shares so many themes with that of his own, (among them, alienation and isolation of the individual, man's struggle against a hostile world,[63]) is significant at the level of language, where his stylistic choices in translating Conrad reveal to us how the two languages played out in the mind of this bi-lingual writer.

The issue of the creativity of the translator has been a feature of translation studies in previous years. In many ways there can be an air of anonymity surrounding the persona of the translator. Venuti's[64] theory of the invisibility of the translator may be key in this seeming oversight: the translator of creative works such as novels can often seem to be a shadowy figure, a name on the title page of a book, without a character or background of his or her own. A publisher may desire a certain level of anonymity from the translator, in order not to overshadow the original author, whose name may be a central selling point for the book. It may be that Scéim Áistriúcháin an Ghúim created a unique, or at least unusual, situation, certainly for its time, wherein it employed renowned creative writers in the Irish language to translate a wide range of English books.[65] Within polysystem theory, it might be postulated that the minority status of the Irish language and its declining numbers of native speakers, combined with the increased interest in the language as an badge of nationalism after the establishment of the Irish Free State, may have contributed to An Gúm's use of Mac Grianna's name as a marketing device to attract reader's to the books. These translations were not, therefore, subject to the treatment of many translations, whose status as translations is ignored, or played down, as Lance Hewson explains, in *An Approach to Translation Criticism:*

[63] See Ó Dochartaigh, L. (1981) Mo Bhealach Féin: Saothar Nualitríochta. *In:* Ó Mordha, S. ed. *Scríobh 5* An Clóchomhar Baile Átha Cliath, p.240-247
[64] See Venuti, L (1995/2008) *The Translator's Invisibility: a History of Translation,* London and New York , Routledge *passim*
[65] For a detailed summary of An Gúm's policy on translation, see Uí Laighléis G. 2018 *passim*.

> Publishers consistently reduce or nullify the translator's role (a novel in translation is marketed as if it had been written by its (original) author alone and often the translator's name does not even appear on the front cover) and, for the general public, translation is at best unproblematic and thus simply not an issue. *Madame Bovary* 'is' *Madame Bovary*. (2011, p.2)

This was certainly not Mac Grianna's experience: in the Ireland of the nineteen thirties, his translations were much anticipated by the Irish speaking reading public.[66] Not only Mac Grianna's reputation as a creative writer, but the fact that he was a native Irish speaker from the Donegal Gaeltacht, as well as part of a well-known family of writers and story tellers gave him all the credentials required in contemporary Irish society's eyes to translate a renowned writer of English such as Conrad, so although the original had its own fame, Mac Grianna's version was able to stand alone with its audience of Irish speakers. It may be that the bilingualism of much of the target audience helped to create this separation of the two texts, since the English version would also have been available to this bilingual audience.

This also reflects the attitude of some readers regarding all the Irish langugage translations made for An Gúm's translation scheme: these texts were often read for the quality of the Irish into which they had been translated, rather than for the quality of the story contained within them. The original English language text may not have sparked this audience's interest. Many of the works translated for Scéim Aistriúcháin an Ghúm, although highly popular in their day, are now forgotten**.** A case in point would be the first translation by Mac Grianna that I myself came across, that of *Ag Teacht fríd an tSeagal*, his translation of *Comin' thro' the Rye*, by Helen Mathers**.** This novel, written in 1875 is a best-selling love story, which, while an enjoyable read, does not have any literary pretensions. It was chosen by An Gúm, it must be presumed, for its popularity and readability, rather than for any literary merit. On reading it, without knowing that it was translated by Mac Grianna, I realised after reading a few pages that it was indeed Mac Grianna who had translated the work, I had recognised his unique voice and style. This might indicate that his unique authorial voice and style can penetrate even such a coy and oversentimental style, typically that of the female writer of romantic fiction, as that found in *Comin' thro' the Rye*. This brings up the intriguing question of how his voice

[66] *Ibid*

might penetrate the writing of a writer of high literary reputation such as Conrad, whom Mac Grianna respected as a writer of repute and ability.

In recent years, An Gúm's strategem of employing well-known creative writers as translators has become a popular selling point in marketing Irish language poetry: it is a marketing device used in the translation of Irish language poetry, that an Irish poet who writes in the Irish language be translated into English by an Irish poet who writes in the English language thus ensuring that aficionados of both poets buy the book. One such publication was *Fifty Minute Mermaid (*2007) with poems by Nuala Ní Dhomhnaill, a poet in the Irish language, translated by Paul Muldoon, an Irish poet in the English language. It is not just a cynical marketing ploy, however, and demonstrates how creativity can be sparked by translation, something celebrated by Keats in the nineteenth century by his poem 'On First Looking into Chapman's Homer'. (*The Complete Peoms of John Keats*, 2001 p.43)

> Then were I like some watcher of the skies when a new planet swims into his ken

This image of the reader of a translated piece of work as a star-gazer (referencing Herschel's discovery of Uranus in 1781) discovering a new planet is an apt one: in this case Keats' sense of making a new discovery derives from reading an older translation of Homer[67] and the effect that its freshness and difference from later translations by Dryden and Pope has upon him, seeming to give the translation a new lease of life. Chapman's translation is a paraphrase of the original, not one transposed into the rhyming couplets of the eighteenth century, that would have been common in Keat's time, and this 'back-to-basics' style allowed what at least seemed a fresher interpretation of the original. Keats also uses the (incorrect) image of Cortes as the first European to look upon the Pacific as an image to equate his feelings of wonder at Chapman's translation, ironically, in these post-colonial times, and in the light of post-colonial translation theory.

Poetry can perhaps be given consideration as a special case in the art of translation: it uses a much higher proportion of heightened imagery and rhetoric, and usually has a more concentrated proportion of such language, and linguistic effects.

[67] See Chapman, G. (1616/this edition 1888) *The Iliads of Homer*, London, John Russell Smith

Poems are, as a general rule, shorter than novels or short stories, even a long epic poem, such as Homer's. The translator of a novel or short story will not be faced with such a concentration of heightened language and image, but he or she may have to be alert to such passages which may be strewn relatively inconspicuously through the writer's prose passages.

All translators are faced with some form of imagic or metaphoric language, no matter how seemingly unliterary the translation. Translators of unliterary texts will have to translate some form of metaphor, even if simply to translate clichéd or stock phrases, which often contain imagery.[68] Certainly there has been a sea-change in the perception of the translator as a sort of journeyman worker, cheerfully engaged to the best of a limited ability, in hammering the pristine, translucent diamond of the original text into the clouded, opaque opal of another language. However, the opal may possess a beauty that is different from, but not necessarily lesser than, the diamond. This has an echo of George Steiner's (1975) image of mining to describe the act of translation[69], but the image of a reverse alchemy may also be appropriate to describe prevailing perceptions of the translator, where the translator makes base metal of the gold of the original text.

There is always the implication that the original must be better than the translation, an assumption that is now being challenged (Basnett and LeFevere, 1990). In fact it can be argued that the translation may improve, may even outdo, the original. Boase-Beier and Holman (1998) argue that, in mainstream culture, this concept is not new:

> This is indeed an idea that is quite familiar to us from other types of ideas and adaptions. We accept almost without question that an opera may be better than the obscure story on which it was based, and we are not especially surprised when the television series *Inspector Morse* turns out far superior to Colin Dexter's dull novels. It seems unusual in translation only because the prevailing view of the translator is still as one whose role is subsidiary and who must be faithful even to the extent of copying weaknesses. (1998, p.13)

These forms of translation are what comprise Jakobson's intersemiotic translation, that of translation, not into another language, but into a different medium. The more commonly accepted definition of the word 'translation' would exclude such

[68] See Pisarska,(1989*) passim* for a full analysis
[69] See Steiner, (1975), *After Babel* p.298.

non-linguistic forms, which are more usually described by the word ‘adaptation’, and, arguably, are not generally perceived as translation, which popularly refers to language-based adaptation. The dictionary gives this language-based meaning as its primary definition with adaptation from another medium in second place. However, this secondary meaning is not common in everyday communication. Television adaptations of novels and other such inter-media crossovers are not thought of or referred to as translations. They are adaptations, and that word now carries this very specific meaning almost to the exclusion of other definitions.

In the popular culture of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, it is mainly through adaptation to electronic media that an earlier print culture is consumed. The advent of moving visual media such as cinema and television in the twentieth century signalled a huge demand for adaptations of stories and classic novels for transfer to the screen as popular entertainment, to the point where often it is mainly through these adaptations that the original printed form is accessed by large sections of the population. In my own case, for example, I have seen several television and film adaptations of both *War and Peace* and *Anna Karenina,* and feel familiar with the characters, plots and outcomes of the novels, without having read Tolstoy’s original works. Had I read the books I would have done so in an English translation, as I do not speak Russian. No doubt many of the adapters of the books, film directors, screenwriters and so on, of these English language productions, were also working from a translation of the original Russian. Such stories are then remade to suit a perceived audience, to make them ‘popular’ and to make money from their distribution. The original text, with its insights couched in the original language, may be lost sight of and become sidelined. Vladimir Nabokov famously, and controversially, felt unable to translate Pushkin’s *Eugene Onegin* into a ‘domesticated’ English, in which, according to Coates (1998, p.91), he felt, not just some but all of the original would be lost:

> ‘The controversy centred on the way in which Nabokov chose to convey Pushkin’s witty, elegant rhymed verse: instead of the smooth domesticated poesy of previous translators, Nabokov offered up a word-for-word literalist version, which was outweighed by voluminous notes and commentaries that ran to six times the length of the text they annotated. To many critics, Nabokov seemed to have lost his belief in the possibility of translation,’

Whether adaptation into another medium is a useful comparison to make in the case of translation into another language merits some doubt. There is no change of medium in language translation, no change of mode from written to visual, for example. The only thing that changes is the form of the medium, the language, rather than the medium itself. However, it is still a major change, and some ways a more profound and a more basic change than that of medial adaptation. The bilingualism required to translate from one language to another is a mechanical skill, to which then must be added the ability to understand the insights and motives of the original author and bring them to the target text through the medium of sensitive translation into the source language. This is very different type of creative skill than that of making a screen or stage dramatisation of a novel or short story, where acting, direction, and even costume and set design can play a part in creating a new form of the original text. Perhaps the closest role to that of the translator in this case might be the screenwriter, who may, like the translator, often work alone (although there are often collaborations) and work solely with some form of the original text.

There is, however, some truth to the nature of adaptation, or re-working within textual translation. Every language has its own shape and syntax, and at the level of lexis, each word contains a semantic range, a range of meaning which can vary in tiny increments in order to subtly change and manipulate meaning. A translator must be alive to these subtle differences, and this knowledge gives the translator scope for creativity, and a level of autonomy, a chance for them to they can own the translation. Boase-Beier and Holman (1998**)** envisage a point where translators move from reading to translating as the point where

> … they move from being readers to being writers and what has to be placed under scrutiny is their competence for the task as authors in their own right … (1998, p.8)

Seosamh Mac Grianna is first and foremost a creative writer and he regarded his work as a translator primarily as a means of earning a living. It is well-known that he disliked the process of translation itself, and was unhappy with his treatment by the management of Scéim Aistriúcháin an Ghúm[70]. There is also evidence that he found the process of translating easy and could accomplish it with minimal reworking or

[70]See Úí Laighléis (2018) pp.132-207 for a detailed analysis of Mac Grianna's relationship with *An Gúm*.

revision, stating that the process of translating was 'as easy as tying my shoes'.[71] As one of the most highly-regarded writers in the Irish literary canon, he possessed great creative ability.

Guildfords Definitions of Characteristics of a Creative Inividual

The nature of creativity itself is difficult to pin down and define. One of the first psychologists to tackle the nature of creativity, Guildford describes the process of creativity as incorporating the following psychological processes – preparation, incubation, inspiration and evaluation. His most important contribution to the nature of creativity is his formulation of nine dimensions, or basic abilities which are prerequisites for creativity. These are fluency, novelty, flexibility, ability to synthesise, ability to analyse, ability to reorganise or redefine, complexity or span of ideational structure, restraint and evaluation.[72] Guildford's ideas[73] have been expanded and developed throughout the years since he first expounded upon them.

Many, if not all, of these abilties are important for the translator of creative works and it is interesting to investigate whether Mac Grianna displays some or all of these traits in his translation of Conrad, and, if so, how they illuminate his versions of the source texts.

Guildford defines fluency as 'the person who is capable of producing a large number of ideas per unit of time, other things being equal has a greater chance of having significant ideas' (1950, p.342). Another, perhaps more common, definition of fluency is of course the ability to speak a non-native language well, as well, or almost as well as a native speaker of the language. Mac Grianna is bilingual in Irish and English, with equal fluency in both languages.

Guildford suggests that novelty can be demonstrated in tests as 'the tendency to give remote verbal associations in a word-association test; to give remote similarities in a similes test; and to give connotative synonyms for words.'(1950, p.452). Again, the ability to make 'remote verbal associations' in translation may take

[71] See *Mo Bhealach Féin* p.8 'Dar liom féin, bhí sé sásta airgead a thabhairt domh as obair a bhí chomh furast le mo bhróg a cheangal'.
[72] Guildford (1950)
[73] See Sternberg, R.J &. Grigorenko, E.L. (2001) Guilford's Structure of Intellect Model and Model of Creativity: Contributions and Limitations*, Creativity Research Journal*,13 pp. 3-4,

the translation into a lyrical or poetic realm that a more straightforward equivalence might not reach.

He discusses the 'individual's *flexibility* of mind, the ease with which he changes set', (1950, p.452) and ability to 'branch out readily into new channels of thought' rather than remain in a rut. Although it may appear on the surface that translation does not allow flexibility of thought, since the source text can seem to dictate what should appear in the translation, it does however allow great scope for flexibility of expression, through the use of the language choices that the translator can make.

He says that 'much creative thinking requires the organizing of ideas into much larger, more inclusive patterns'. (1950, p.453) A translation, *per se*, is an exercise in synthesis, the reorganisation of the ideas within the original text into the patterns of the language of the tanslated text. Mac Grianna's bi-lingualism gives him a high level the ability to synthesise, and the translations that he carried out for Scéim Áistriúcháin an Ghúim allow us to see the workings of a bi-lingual mind *par excellence*.

The ability to analyse goes hand-in-hand with the ability to synthesise, as Guildford says 'Symbolic structures must often be broken down before new ones can be built.'(1950, p.453) Guildford here could be describing the process of translation. Translation, unless it is a word-for-word exercise, inevitably requires the pulling apart of the original, linguistically and sometimes intellectually in order to reconstruct the source text. The syntax and lexis of the target language

The abiltiy to reorganise or redefine, according to Guildford, can be the product of the preceding abilities of flexiblilty, analysis and synthesis and he states 'many inventions have been the nature of a transformation of an existing object into a different design'. (1950, p.453) This quality seems to have particular relevance for the act of translating. 'The nature of a 'transformation of an existing object into a different design' is apt as a description of the translation process itself. Each language has its syntax, which is essentially a method for organising sentences and ultimately for organising thought.

He describes complexity/span of ideational structure as the amount of interrelated ideas a person can manipulate at the same time – 'Some individuals become confused readily; they can keep only one or two items of structure delineated and properly related. Others have a higher resistance to confusion – a greater span of this type.' (1950, p.453). Translation, in general, provides this complexity, and translation of creative work increases the level of complexity in terms of the translator's ability in recreating the creativity of the original.

Guildford states that 'Creative work that is to be realistic or accepted must be done under some degree of evaluative restraint' and adds 'Too much restraint, of course, is fatal to the birth of new ideas'. (1950, p.452) If we can equate 'restraint' with 'constraint', we find a common theme in ideas of creative expression. Boase sees constraint as a key part of creativity, citing such constraints as following strictly formulated poetic forms such as sonnets. '...creativity is often intimately tied to constraint, it is a response to it, it is enhanced by it.' (p. 6). The key constraint for the translator is the original text itself, which, since it must be rendered as nearly as possible to the original, leaves, it would seem, the creative writer's hands tied when in the act of translation, and his pent-up creativity without an outlet. But although the translator may have to reproduce the thought behind the original text, the expression of that thought in the target language is where creativity in translation lies. Guilford's list of qualities is an attempt to break down the characteristics that determine creativity, and an analysis of these characteristics in Mac Grianna may help to illuminate his creativity when involved in translating.

Examples of Mac Grianna's Creativity

In order to see how these qualities of creativity play out in Mac Grianna's translations of Conrad, it is necessary to look at Conrad's style of writing. On first reading, Conrad's style does not seem, at first, to be a poetic one: he relies on irony to create character (very notably in the character of Captain McWhirr, in *Typhoon*, for example) and his style appears, initially, to be that of the standard late nineteenth century novel, with an omniscient third person narration. He does not make the sorts of modernist stylistic developments (streams of consciousness, or structural experimentation for example) that are to be found in the next generation of authors of the modernist movement, such as James Joyce or Virginia Woolf, although his

style may be viewed as a bridge to modernism.[74] Nevertheless his prose does contain unusual features which have been variously attributed to his trilingualism and the influence of Polish and French upon his English,[75] and similarities in style to nineteenth-century French authors such as Gustave Flaubert and Guy de Maupassant,[76] who both employ a coolly ironic, sometimes even comedic, stance to maintain authorial distance from their characters. However, Martin Seymour-Smith (1995) suggests, in the case of *The Nigger of the Narcissus* that it is:

> In certain respects… nearer to a poem or to a novel or novella, both in its deliberately heightened language …and its fabulous qualities. It owes much, and not obliquely to the most famous literary ballad ever written: Coleridge's 'Rime of the Ancient Mariner'. (1995, p.31)

There are certainly lyrical passages in the Conrad oeuvre that Mac Grianna translated: the opening paragraph of Chapter Two, for example, which describes the ship, the Narcissus, setting sail:

> A slight haze blurred the horizon. Outside the harbour the measureless expanse of smooth water lay sparkling like a floor of jewels, and as empty as the sky. The short black tug gave a pluck to windward, in the usual way, then let go the rope, and hovered for a moment on the quarter with her engines stopped; while the slim, long hull of the ship moved ahead slowly under lower topsails. The loose upper canvas blew out in the breeze with soft round contours, resembling small white clouds snared in the maze of ropes. Then the sheets were hauled home, the yards hoisted, and the ship became a high and lonely pyramid, gliding, all shining and white, through the sunlit mist. (*NN,* p.33)

> Bhí braghall de cheo bruithne ar bhun na spéire. Taobh amuigh den chuan bhí clár leathan do-thomhaiste na mara ina luighe go ciúin agus comh folamh leis an spéir; bhé sé breacuighthe le scéimh mar bhéadh urlár de chlocha luachmhara ann. Chuaidh an bád tarranta beag dubh claon suas chun na gaoithe, mar ba ghnáthach léithe. Annsin leig sí leis an rópa, agus d'fhan sí tamall beag ar an cheathramhain agus a cuid inneall ina seasamh. Chuaigh an caol-bharc fada chun tosaigh go mailltriallach, agus gan tógtha acht na bárr-sheóltaí íochtair. Luchtaigh na seóltaí uachtair amach ina mbuilg ins an gaoith, mar bhéadh néaltaí beaga bána ceaptha ina eagach rópaí. Righeadh na sgódaí agus tógadh na giordáin, agus d'éirigh an long ina caiseal árd uaigneach gheal luinnearach, ag sleamhnú fríd an ghrian-solas cheodhach.' (*MD,* p.35)

[74] See Watt, I (1979) *Conrad in the Nineteenth Century*. pp.32-33
[75] See Morzinski, M. (1994) *Linguistic Influence of Polish on Joseph Conrad's Style, passim* and Hervouet (1990) *The French Face of Joseph Conrad*, *pasim*
[76] See Hervouet Y. (1990) *The French Face of Joseph Conrad*, *passim*

> Une brume légère estompait l'horizon. Hors du port, l'étendue d'eau calme scintillait à perte de vue comme un parterre de joyaux, vide comme le ciel. Le petit remorqueur noir tira un coup sec du côté du vent, selon l'usage, puis largua le cordage et, la machine stoppée, s'attarda un instant en arrière de notre hanche, tandis qu'avançait lentement la longue coque fine du navire sous huniers fixes. Les voiles supérieures lagruées se gonflèrent sous la brise en contours mollement arrondis, pareils à de petits nuages blancs pris dans le dédale des cordages Puis on borda les écoutes, on hissa les vergues et le navire se transforma en une haute pyramide solitaire qui, dans l'éclat de sa blancheur, glissait au travers de la brume ensoleillée. (*NN,* p.519)

It is interesting to examine this passage in the light of Guildford's nine dimensions of creativity to see if Mac Grianna's translations exemplify them. The first dimension is novelty which the following example can demonstrate:

> Then the sheets were hauled home, the yards hoisted, and the ship became a high and lonely pyramid, gliding, all shining and white, through the sunlit mist.' (*NN*, p.33)
>
> Righeadh na sgódaí agus tógadh na giordáin, agus d'éirigh an long ina caiseal árd uaigneach gheal luinnearach, ag sleamhnú fríd an ghrian-solas cheodhach.' (*MD*, p.35)
>
> Puis on borda les écoutes, on hissa les vergues et le navire se transforma en une haute pyramide solitaire qui, dans l'éclat de sa blancheur, glissait au travers de la brume ensoleillée. (*NN,* p.519)

A very obvious novel translation here is that of *'caiseal*' for 'pyramid'. A *caiseal* is an ancient stone ringfort. This is an example of 'domestication' on Mac Grianna's part, where he gives a domestic equivalent for a 'foreign' object, in this case, a pyramid. Conrad uses the pyramid to describe the triangularity of the ship, an allusion which may seem to be lost by Mac Grianna in this domesticising translation. However he evokes the triangularity of the ship, from Conrad's image of the pyramid, with an equivalent more local triangular structure, that of the Rock of Cashel for instance. The original image is that of the enduring antiquity that pertains to the sailing ship (by now an image of an earlier, pre-industrial world) that Conrad wishes to evoke here. Conrad's image of ancient, enduring, solitary nobility for the ship is aptly captured by Mac Grianna in this image of a relic of an ancient, but lost, civilisation. This is a case of Mac Grianna actually using an Irish, domestic, and national image, to recreate Conrad's internationally known image of pyramids. This practice of Mac Grianna's is here reminiscent of the ancient Irish practice of domestication in translation[77], where

[77] See Ní Sheagha, (1984) *passim*

local images with with the audience is familiar replace ‘foreign’, imported images that the audience might not understand or appreciate, to bring home to the audience the meaning behind the image.

The next example demonstrates how Mac Grianna’s fluency in translation is to the fore:

> Outside the harbour the measureless expanse of smooth water lay sparkling like a floor of jewels, and as empty as the sky. (*NN*, p.33)
>
> Taobh amuigh den chuan bhí clár leathan do-thomhaiste na mara ina luighe go ciúin agus comh folamh leis an spéir; bhí sé breacuighthe le scéimh mar bhéadh urlár de chlocha luachmhara ann. (*MD*, p.35)
>
> Hors du port, l’étendue d’eau calme scintillait à perte de vue comme un parterre de joyaux, vide comme le ciel. (*NN,* p.519)

The lyrical description by Conrad of the sea has been rendered with equal beauty by Mac Grianna. He seems inspired by the sentence: he divides it into two phrases with a semi-colon, he makes no omissions and even adds to the intensity of its descriptive power with the phrase ‘*bhí sé breacuighthe le scéimh*’. This phrase literally means ‘it was speckled/dappled/studded with beauty’, and is the way in which Mac Grianna translates ‘sparkling’. He moves this concept of the water ‘sparkling like a floor of jewels’, to the second half of the sentence, after a semi-colon, to isolate and give emphasis to the image of a floor of sparkling jewels. This expression is not used by any other author in *Tobar na Gaedhilge* and the only other example of it is the following usage by Mac Grianna himself in *An Gradh agus an Ghruaim* (1929, p.95) where he uses it with the same meaning ‘sparkling’, with reference to the brilliance of jewels, exactly Conrad’s metaphor for the sea. Ó Dónaill’s *FGB* (1977) gives ‘breacadh’ as ‘variegation’ and ‘breacadh scéimhe’ as ‘ornamental chequering’:

> breacadh, m. (gs. as s. -aidh, as vn. -ctha). 1. vn. of breac3. 2. Variegation. ~ in éadach, chequering in cloth. ~ ar mhiasa, colour designs on dishes. ~ **scéimhe, ornamental chequering.** (p.134)

Dineen’s *Foclóir Gaeilge agus Béarla* offers the following:

> breacadh, -ctha, m**., act of making spotted; act of variegating;** act of carving; the picking of a mill-stone; act of covering a paper with writing; act of explaining, telling, describing; the breaking (of the day), the dawn (of day). breacadóir, -óra, -óiridhe, m,, an engraver, a carver, an embroiderer; one who

picks the stoneof a mill. breacaim, -adh, v. tr., I **speckle, variegate, embroider, carve**; I cover a paper with writing; Iindite; I tell, explain, publish; breacfad do cháil, I will proclaim your character (E. R.); I begin to brighten (as the day); I pick a mill-stone; ní bhead im bhreacadh féin leis, I will not bebothered with it, it is not worth the trouble.breacaire, g. id., pl. -ridhe, m., a graver or carver, a graving tool, a quern-picker; a (sorry) angler.breacaireacht, -a, pl. id., f., engraving, sculpture, embroidery, **chequering,** carving, the picking of a mill-stone.breacán, -áin, pl.' (p.83)

Lane's English-Irish Dictionary (Foclóir Béarla-Gaedhilge (1909) and McKenna's *English-Irish Phrase Dictionary* (1911) (which would have been available to Mac Grianna) do not give this expression in any sense as a translation for 'sparkling' or 'glittering' and indeed, it is unlikely that he went to a dictionary to find this phrase. In 'Focail Fholaithe'[78], an online resource taken from the Royal Irish Academay's *Foclóir na Nua-Ghaeilge* one example is given as: '*Bearrád ba ghile ná an t-aol is an breacadh bhí trí le scéimh* (song) 'A cap whiter than lime with beautiful designs on it'. It is not made clear what song this comes from. The source for this meaning is, however, Séamus Ó Grianna, Seosamh Mac Grianna's brother. The other examples given here for '*breacadh*' from Munster and Connacht do not have this meaning. It would seem that it describes designs or 'chequering' on cloth, also given in *FGB* (it should be noted that the author of this dictionary, Niall Ó Dónaill, was also from Donegal, from Loch an Iúir, close to Rann na Féirste, where the Mac Grianna family originated). It may be that this was an expression that was peculiar to the Donegal area, or more commonly used there than in other areas of the Gaeltacht.

It is an unusual way to translate the word 'sparkling'. It is as if Mac Grianna has taken the idea of 'variegation' and 'chequering' and transferred it to the medium of light itself. As well as this, he uses the idea of *breacuithe*, often with the accompaniment of *le scéimh* to describe the sparkle of jewels, and, by extension, the sparkle of starlight, to convey the idea of a studding of sparkling precious stones. It

[78] The basis of 'Focail Fholaithe' is explained thus: 'Thaisteal bailitheoirí ar fud na hÉireann san fhichiú haois le focail agus frásaí Gaeilge a bhailiú ó chainteoirí dúchasacha na Gaeilge. Theastaigh uathu an saibhreas seo a chaomhnú ar bhealach éigin. Rinne foireann an tionscadail seo na bailiúcháin a eagrú i bhfoirm inchuardaithe, ionas go mbeidh teacht ag an bpobal orthu, agus go mbeidh úsáideoirí in ann iad a chuardach de réir chritéir éagsúla. Chomh maith leis sin, rinneadh taighde ar na hiontrálacha, agus aimsíodh 'focail fholaithe', i.e. iontrálacha nach bhfuil luaite i bhfoclóirí clóite na fichiú haoise, agus atá, mar sin, i mbaol a gcaillte'. www.fng.ie, (28/09/18)

would seem that Mac Grianna reserves the use of the expression *breacuithe le scéimh* and even the word *breacuithe* on its own to describe something which is studded with sparkling items, such as the starlit sky. Ó Dónaill's definition of 'ornamented chequerwork' indicates a black-and-white effect, that of a chess or draughts' board, for example, which would make this phrase particularly apt when describing the clear starry night sky. Further examples from Mac Grianna's translations seem to confirm this predilection on his part. The following example uses the word '*breacuithe*' on its own to describe the sparkle of precious stones: the word does normally contain the meaning 'dotted' or 'studded', with *FGB* giving '*breactha le réaltaí'* as 'studded with stars' (p.134) and '*réaltbhreac*' as 'star-spangled'. (p.989).

> The glassy water was sparkling with stars. (*Ben-Hur: A Tale of the Christ*, p19)
>
> Bhí an t-uisge mar ghloine, agus na réalta ag breacadh fríd.(*Ben-Hur: Scéal fá Chríost* p 37)
>
> Le miroir des eaux reflétait la clarté des étoiles: (*Ben Hur* p.23)

In the next example, Mac Grianna has expanded the semantic range of the word *breacuithe* to include its connection with precious stones, using *breacuithe* to translate 'set about', in other words, 'surrounded by', or 'set with', as in a piece of jewellery being set with precious stones. The image in the original text refers, of course, to the appearance of the world early in the morning, and the image of a precious jewel surrounded by others (presumably referring to the fading early morning stars that still remain in the sky).

> The world looks very fair this morning, like a great, softly splendid emerald set about with sparkling precious stones. (*Comin' thro' the Rye*, p.322)
>
> B'áluinn an chuma a bhí ar an domhan an mhaidin sin, mar bhéadh smaragaid mhór oirdhearc ann agus í breacuithe le clocha luachmhara ann — (*Ag Teacht fríd an tSeagal*, p.495)

The following example is from Mac Grianna's own work:

> Bhí bruit agus fallaingeacha agus bioráin agus tuirc óir agus airgid ag breacadh le scéimh ar dhá thaoibh an tábla. (*An Grádh agus an Ghruaim*, p.95)

Again Mac Grianna uses the expression *breacadh le scéimh* to describe the sparkle of jewellery. In this case the jewellery is alongside mantles and cloaks ('*bruit agus*

fallingeacha') which, since they are positioned earlier in the sentence, before the mention of the gold and silver pins and torques (‘*bioráin agus tuirc óir agus airgid'*) may or may not be included in the description ‘*breacadh le scéimh'*, which most definitely does apply to the ‘*bioráin agus tuirc óir agus airgid'* that lie beside the cloaks and mantles. It is probable that Mac Grianna is reserving the expression to illuminate the sparkle of the jewellery, rather than the texture of the cloth although *FBG* does include the meaning ‘*eadach breac*’ as ‘variegated cloth’ (p. 134).

In the following example from *Ben Hur*, Mac Grianna uses ‘*breacadh*’ to translate ‘enamelling’. This seems to chime with the dictionary definition of ‘breacadh scéimhe’ as meaning ‘ornamental chequerwork’:

> On its slopes, in the low places, on the swells and higher hills, the earth sparkled with **a strange enamelling**. (*Ben-Hur: A Tale of the Christ*, p.436)
>
> Ar thaobhannaí an chnuic, agus ar an ísleacht, agus ar na cnuic ar gach taoibh, bhí **breacadh éagsamhalta** ar an tír. (*Ben-Hur: Scéal fá Chríost* p.622)
>
> Sur les pentes, dans les ravins, sur les mamelons et les collines plus élevées, partout, le sol disparaissait **sous la multitude des spectateurs**: (*Ben Hur*, p.498)

It would appear that, in this case, the French translation of this line dispenses completely with the image of enamelling, choosing to leave out the metaphor, and simply use the literal explanation of ‘*spectateurs*’. This is a further example of Mac Grianna’s ability to expand the semantic range of a lexical item. In the example below, he uses it to translate ‘dew-spangled’:

> I take my way across the **dew-spangled** meadows, (*Comin' thro' the Rye*, p27)
>
> Na dhiaidh sin chuaidh mé trasna an mhíodúin a bhí **breacuighthe leis an driuchta** (*Ag Teacht fríd an tSeagal,* p.36)

This translation is another example of Mac Grianna’s allignment of the word *breacadh* in its various forms with the sparkle of jewellery. Again, in this example, the idea of sparkling jewellery is incorporated into the word *breacuighthe*, an idea which is compounded by the dotting of dewdrops, with their watery resemblance to diamonds, or, as in this case, to spangles.

Mac Grianna does vary his vocabulary when translating ‘sparkling’, even when in reference to starry skies, or precious stones, as the following examples illustrate. The first two show alternative translations for the night sky. The first example simply gives the literal translation, using adjective-for-adjective, ‘sparkling’ for ‘*luinnireach*’.

> when the faint night breeze, heavy with aromatic exhalations of the islands, shoved the brig gently along under the peaceful and **sparkling** sky, (*AlF,* p.5)
>
> Bhíodh baladh cumhra na n-oileán ar aer na h-oidhche, agus bhíodh séideán ag seóladh na luinge go séimh, agus bhíodh an spéir sáimh **luinnireach**. (*Dith Chéille Almayer,* p.14)
>
> tandis que la brise légère du soir, chargée des senteurs aromatiques des îles, faisait doucement filer le brick sous le ciel paisible et étincelant,(*FA*, p.10)

Similarly in the example below, where he is describing jewellery, or precious stones, he uses the same adjective:

> Think ye that I prize these **sparkling** fragments of stone above my liberty? (*Ivanhoe,* p.526)
>
> An síleann tú go bhfuil níos mó sílte agam de na clocha miona **luinnireacha** sin ná tá do mo shaoirse agam? (*Ivanhoe,* p.648)
>
> Croyez-vous que j'estime ces pierreries étincelantes plus que ma liberté, (*Ivanhoe*, p. 893)

This example eschews any attempt to translate ‘sparkling with stars’ literally. He marks the expression ‘sparkling with stars’, by giving it a short sentence of its own *‘Bhí an iomad réalt ins an spéir’*:

> The night, like most nights of the winter season in the hill country, was clear, crisp, and **sparkling** with stars. (*Ben-Hur::A Tale of the Christ*, p.42)
>
> Bhí oidhche ghlan chruaidh fhuar ann mar bíos ins na cnocaibh in aimsir geimhridh. **Bhí an iomad réalt ins an spéir**. (*Ben-Hur: Scéal fá Chríost,* p.73)
>
> La nuit, comme la plupart des nuits d’hiver dans les contrées montagneuses, était claire, piquante, **étincelante** d’étoiles. (*Ben Hur,* p.50)

Syntactic differences within the two languages here may force Mac Grianna to give the stars their own sentence here: he uses the adjectives ‘*glan*’, ‘*cruaidh’*, and ‘*fuar*’ directly, rather than in apposition, as are ‘clear’ and ‘crisp’ in the source text. There is an almost romantic longing in the way he chooses to translate ‘sparkling with stars’ as ‘*Bhí an iomad réalt ins an spéir’*, which could be translated as ‘There were so

many stars in the sky'. The word *iomad* is given in *FGB* as meaning 'abundance' or 'excess', and is used idiomatically to mean 'many'. The expression certainly has a yearning quality which is not really present in the source text, although this is clearly a scene-setting descriptive paragraph, and which is not present in the French translation, which is simply a word-for-word '*étincelante* d'étoiles' for 'sparkling with stars.' Mac Grianna's marking of his translation by giving it its own sentence contributes towards this quality, by indicating the infinitesimal nature of the starred sky.

Mac Grianna here evinces his ability to be flexible within the translation:

> The loose upper canvas blew out in the breeze with soft round contours, resembling small white clouds snared in the maze of ropes. (*NN,* p.33)
>
> Luchtaigh na seóltaí uachtair amach ina mbuilg ins an gaoith, mar bhéadh néaltaí beaga bána ceaptha in eagach rópaí. (*MD,* p.35)
>
> Les voiles supérieures lagruées se gonflèrent sous la brise en contours mollement arrondis, pareils à de petits nuages blancs pris dans le dédale des cordages (*NN,* p.519)

The most notable change made by Mac Grianna in this sentence is the translation of 'with soft round contours' as '*ina mbuilg'*. *Bulg*, (modern spelling *bolg*) which can mean 'belly', is being used by Mac Grianna here in another meaning of the word, 'bulge', particulary of a ship's sail billowing outward. *FGB* gives this meaning as follows:

> bolg 2, v.t. & i. (vn. ~adh m, gs. & pp. ~tha). 1. Bulge. Rud a bholgadh, to bulge, swell out, sth. **Seolta a bholgadh, to fill, swell, sails.** Muinchillí a bholgadh, to puff out sleeves. Balla, carraig, ag ~adh (amach), wall, rock, bulging (outwards). Farraige bholgtha, swollen, heaving, sea. 2. Blister. Péint ag ~adh, paint blistering. (p.123)

The standard word for a contour in Irish is *imlíne* which can also mean an outline or perimeter, and usually, with the word *comhairde*, refers to the contours of a map, and has that rather dry, geographical connotation. Conrad's 'soft' contours imply the contours or curvature of the body. A possible translation for this meaning might be '*fíor'*, meaning 'figure' or 'outward form'. Rather than proffer a literal translation here, Mac Grianna uses a word which contains the meaning 'soft, round contour' within its semantic range, It also has the further meaning that refers to a specific body-part, the belly, the part of the body to which the adjectives 'soft' and 'round' most aptly

apply, to intensify the image of the great white sails billowing out as the ship moves away.

Mac Grianna's ability to synthesise or to analyse comes to the fore in this example:

> A slight haze blurred the horizon (*NN,* p.33)
>
> Bhí braghall de cheo bruithne ar bhun na spéire. (*MD,* p.35)
>
> Une brume légère estompait l'horizon. (*NN,* p.519)

Conrad's 'a slight haze' is translated by Mac Grianna as *braghall de cheo bruithne* which translates as 'a wisp/a light covering of heat haze'. Mac Grianna has concentrated on finding the *mots justes* to translate this without translating the verb 'blurred' of which the closest verb form translation in Irish would be *dóiléirigh* or *cuir ceo ar*. *Dóiléirigh* translates as 'to darken, or obscure', which is not a part of Conrad's meaning here, where it is light, that of the hazy sunshine, that is causing the blurring. Mac Grianna allows the word '*braghall*', with its meaning of 'a light covering' to combine with '*ceo bruithne'* to work here in place of 'blurred'. Rather than blurring the horizon, in Mac Grianna's translation, the haze 'is on the horizon', adding to the sense of the stillness and softness of the mist. The sentence also benefits from the alliteration of '*braghall*' with '*bruithne'* as well as the iambic pentameter of the rhythm, and the use of '*bun na spéire*', literally 'the bottom of the sky', which not only contributes to the iambic pentameter rhythm, but also gives a romantic tinge to description of the sea and the horizon, which nicely adds to the romantic flow of the ship taking off, which Conrad is trying to create.

The abilty to reorganise or redefine is of course of supreme importance for a translator. It could be argued that the ability is the most important in the translator's arsenal. Mac Grianna demonstrates it here:

> The short black tug gave a pluck to windward, in the usual way, then let go the rope, and hovered for a moment on the quarter with her engines stopped; while the slim, long hull of the ship moved ahead slowly under lower topsails. (*NN,* p.33)
>
> Chuaidh an bád tarranta beag dubh claon suas chun na gaoithe, mar ba ghnáthach léithe. Annsin leig sí leis an rópa, agus d'fhan sí tamall beag ar an cheathramhain agus a cuid inneall ina seasamh. (*MD,* p.35)

> Le petit remorqueur noir tira un coup sec du côté du vent, selon l'usage, puis largua le cordage et, la machine stoppée, s'attarda un instant en arrière de notre hanche, tandis qu'avançait lentement la longue coque fine du navire sous huniers fixes (*NN,* p.519)

Conrad's slightly unusual 'gave a pluck to the winward' seems to derive from a nautical phrase which is not cited in dictionaries. Mac Grianna has redefined or interpreted the phrase with the word '*claon*', which, in this case, means 'a little', so his translation, when back-translated to English reads something along the lines of 'the boat went up a little to the wind'. However, the word '*claon*' also means slanting or inclining, giving a picture of the boat slanting a little to one side in the water. Mac Grianna equals or adds to Conrad's meaning by this full use of the word's semantic range, and recreates, and arguably intensifies Conrad's image here.

Guildford defines complexity as an ideational span, the ability to knit together different strands in order to provide an integrated whole. In order to examine the complexity of Mac Grianna's creative ability, the following extract provides us with a fascinating example where his response to Conrad's lyrical repetitions go far beyond the original of the source text to take the Irish language version into a greatly heightened state (in comparison to the original text and the French translation), with an extensive collection of stylistic effects that impact upon both the eye and ear, as well as providing readers in the Irish language version with more than an equivalent effect. The extracts are as follows:

> He remembered well that time – the look, the accent, the words the effect they produced on him, his very surroundings. He remembered the narrow slanting deck of the brig, the silent sleeping coast, the smooth black surface of the sea with a great bar of gold laid on it by the rising moon. He remembered it all, and he remembered his feelings of mad exultation at the thought of that fortune thrown into his hands. (*AlF,* p.6)

> Ba mhaith a **choinnigh** Almayer **cuimhne ar** an am sin**, ar an** amharc a thug an seanduine **air, agus ar an ghlór ar labhair sé ann**, **agus ar an chainnt a dubhairt sé, agus ar an d**óigh **ar mhéaduigh siad ar** a aigneadh féin, agus **choinnigh** sé **cuimhne ar** gach rud 'á rabh ina thimcheall. **Bhí cuimhne aige ar** an **bh**ord **ch**umhang **a bhí ar** an **bh**ruig agus é **ar** fiar, **bhí cuimhne aige ar an ch**ladach **ch**iúin **a bhí** ina **ch**odladh, agus **bhí cuimhne aige ar an fhairrge** dhubh **ch**omhtrom **a bhí ann. Bhí cuimhne aige ar an** trillse óir **a bhí innte** ag éirghe na gealaighe. **Bhí, bhí cuimhne aige** an iomlán, agus **ar an** lúthghair mhillteanach a **bhí air** nuair a smuaintigh sé **ar an tsaibhreas** a **chuir an chinneamhaint chuige**. (*DCA,* p.18)

> Il se rappelait bien cet instant: le regard, l'accent, les mots, l'effect qu'ils avaient produit sur lui, et le décor. Il se rappelait l'inclinaison du pont étroit du brick, la côte silencieuse dans son sommeil, sa surface noire et lisse de la mer et la grande traînee d'or laissée par la lune â son lever. Il se rappelait tout, et aussi sa folle exultation a l'idée de cette fortune qui lui tombait entre les mains. (*FA,* p.13)

In this short passage, Conrad wishes to create an atmosphere of yearning and melancholy in his character Almayer: he is reminiscing, an occupation which tends to take, almost inevitably, a turn towards melancholy. Conrad uses repetition to evoke this melancholy state of reminiscence, repeating the key phrase 'he remembered', beginning each of his three sentences with it, and following it each time with a list of phrases enumerating Almayer's memories, all but one beginning with 'the'. The French translation follows Conrad's pattern to the letter, and gives us an almost word-for-word rendering. In fact there are exactly 75 words in both the original and the French translation. Mac Grianna's translation contains almost twice that amount, 135 words, which, allowing for differences of structure within the two languages, indicates an expansion of vocabulary, structure and expression on Mac Grianna's part.

Mac Grianna takes Conrad's three sentences and expands them into five sentences, and vastly increases the amount of repetition effects that Conrad has employed. He repeats '*choinnigh sé …cuimhne'*, with its concomitant alliteration, that is, a further, if different, type of repetition, of the */k/* and */x/* sounds, three times in the first few sentences. He follows this with the related expression '*bhí cuimhne aige*' which is repeated five times, and at the end, comes the culminating emphasis, the crescendo-like repetition of *bhí* in *bhí, bhí cuimhne air*. Echoing and strengthening the repetition of *bhí cuimhne aige* with the related repetition of '*a bhí air/ann/innte*' and even '*a bhí ina chodladh*', he also repeats the preposition *ar*, in its various forms,18 times. Each memory he has, every time the noun '*cuimhne*' is used, it is followed by the preposition *ar*, usually '*ar an'*, which accounts for eleven instances: one instance where he says '*cuimhne ar gach rud'*: another where he uses it along with '*smaointigh sé'* – '*smaointigh sé ar an tsaibhreas*' in the final climactic sentence. The preposition 'ar' is also used as the relative form for the simple past - Mac Grianna has two instances of this construction, and one in the idiomatic phrase '*ar fiar*'. There are two further examples of the preposition – one is *'a bhí air'* and the other, similarly, '*a bhí ar an bhruig'*.

Thirteen instances of the the preposition *ar* are followed by the definite article *an*+ noun. The majority of these are instances where Almayer is thinking 'about' something – the preposition *ar*, usually translated as 'on' in English, is used in Irish here, similar to an older English form of 'thinking on' something, still used in some dialects in the north of England.[79] In Conrad's English there is no preposition, the verb to remember is directly transitive: one remembers something, no preposition intervenes between the act of remembering and the memory itself. The prepositon followed by the article, a repeating *ar an*, provides a rhythm that Conrad's memory lists do not have.

Conrad is attempting to create a dream-like atmosphere here, an almost trance-like state in which memories flash past Almayer's eye in a series of images, as if he were looking through a photograph album. In Mac Grianna's more rhythmic version, the series of memory images floats, rather than flashes past, in particular in the second sentence of the passage:

> **Choinnigh, ar an** amharc a thug an seanduine **air, agus ar an ghlór ar labhair sé ann**, **agus ar an chainnt a dubhairt sé, agus ar an d**óigh **ar mhéaduigh siad ar** a aighneadh féin, agus **choinnigh** sé **cuimhne ar** gach rud 'a rabh ina thimcheall.

Here, the alliterative series of *ar an*, often coming after *agus* (and), a connecting particle that is omitted by Conrad, and the French translation, punctuates the list and slows it down, making Almayer more reflective, more in control of the memory than in the original version, where he seems a passive victim, almost at the mercy of, or under the control of the images as they race into his head. The tone has been subtly changed here, whether consciously or unconsciously, by Mac Grianna, and by the idiomatic difference in the two languages.

This slowing-down and punctuating of the stream of Almayer's memories is also due to the expansive way in which Mac Grianna translates the Conrad's single nouns. Rather than a single noun, Mac Grianna gives us a full noun phrase, among them – 'the look' is translated as '*ar an amharc a thug an seanduine air*','the accent' as '*ar an ghlór ar labhair sé ann*' and 'the words' as '*ar an chainnt a dubhairt sé*'. Each of these phrases repeats the word *ar* in some of its forms, '*air'*, meaning *on him*

[79] See www.britishslang.xo.uk/community/Yorkshire slang (26/09/18), where the idiomatic expression from Yorkshire 'think on!' is described as being 'a mild warning.'

or *ar* as the past relative form in *ar labhair*. This expansion into a phrase-form to translate single nouns, with each phrase diminishing slightly in word number from eight to seven to six, each repeating the alliterative '*agus ar an*', as well as the further repetition of a form of *ar* somewhere within the phrase, shows us Mac Grianna caught, as it were, in the creative act.

He has employed a range of stylistic effects culled from the Gaelic story-telling tradition, or *scéalaíocht* in which he was immersed during his childhood. In Teanga Mháire[80] (1992), Ó Corráin describes the attributes of the story-telling style in Donegal that were used by Mac Grianna, in particular its sentence structure:

> Tá gach abairt simplí díreach, gan barraíocht clásal ná fo-ráite a bheith inti agus gan amscaíocht ná castacht ar bith ag baint léi. An dara rud go bhfuil rithim láidir in achan cheann acu…an tríú rud go bhfuil siméadracht nó comhchruthaíocht ag baint leo uilig (1992, p.95)

In returning to the Gaelic story-telling tradition in which he was saturated in his childhood and youth, Mac Grianna demonstrates how these effects are entwined within the Irish language itself: his repetitions of the preposition '*ar*' for example recall the fact that, because of initial mutations such as lenition and eclipsis which occur on a noun which follows a preposition + definite article, these prepositions are usually repeated in Irish, unlike English. Mac Grianna is making a creative virtue of a grammatical necessity.

As well as the rhythmic effects, and descriptive expansiveness that Mac Grianna has brought into play in these sentences, he has also iterates the idea, or the expression, of memory itself almost twice as often as Conrad. Conrad uses the word 'remembered' four times, Mac Grianna uses the equivalent *cuimhne* seven times. The act of remembering in Irish is usually expressed as a nominal, rather than verbal, construction, and this is how Mac Grianna consistently translates it in this short passage: *bhí cuimhne aige* literally means *a memory was at him* - although the transitive verb *cuimhnigh* exists, the nominal form is arguably more common, and more natural within the structure of the language: *coinnigh cuimhne ar* is Mac Grianna's other form for translating *remembered* (adding as it does to his store of

[80] '*Máire*' is the *nom de plume* of Mac Grianna's brother, Séamus Ó Grianna.

repeated *ar* prepositions) - Mac Grianna uses it to translate Conrad's first phrase 'he remembered well', using the transitive verb *coinnigh* to give the added clarity to the memory that Conrad's use of the adverb *well* brings. This verb, which means *to keep* or *to retain* and which translates here as *to retain something in the memory*'[81], also gives emphasis to the importance of these memories to Almayer: in Irish he has kept or retained them in his memory, they are important to him. Mac Grianna's use of this verb helps to give a flavour of, as well as giving emphasis to, Almayer's inward brooding obsessiveness, his descent into paranoia. Other instances where Mac Grianna uses this construction to translate the act of remembering demonstrate that he normally uses it in this way: below are some other examples of how Mac Grianna uses this construction in translation, including examples from his translations of Conrad's works as well as some translations from his translation of *Ben Hur* by Lew Wallace and *Comin' thro' the Rye* by Helen Mathers.

> Nothing, surely, can be fairer than a very handsome child asleep, and Wattie's face might well linger in the memory of any one who saw him at this moment - (*Comin' thro' the Rye*, p.367)
>
> Cinnte ní'l nídh le fagháil is áilne ná páiste dóigheamhail ina chodladh, agus an té a tchífeadh Wattie an bomaite seo d'fhéadfadh sé cuimhne a choinneáil air — (*Ag Teacht fríd an tSeagal*, p.560)

In the example from *Comin' thro' the Rye* (*Ag Teacht fríd an tSeagal*) Mac Grianna uses the expression to translate *linger in the memory* close to the dictionary meaning in Irish of 'keep' or 'retain' in the memory. The English word *linger* has a further semantic range which incorporates the idea of overstaying, remaining when need or desire has ended, or, as in this case, of remaining as a pleasant afterthought, reminiscent of Wordsworth's definition of poetry as 'emotion recollected in tranquility'. It might be argued that Mac Grianna incorporates this semantic range from the English original and expands its semantic range in Irish, or at least illuminates this shade of meaning that may already exist in the Irish phrase by his use of it to translate '*linger*'in this case.

> if one of them omitted nothing of detail in recounting the loss of a lamb, the relation between him and the unfortunate should be remembered: (*Ben-Hur: a Tale of the Christ*, p.41)

[81] *FBG* (1977) p.340.

> An fear a bhí ag innse gur chaill sé uan níor fhág sé aon rud dá laighead é amuigh. Ach ba chóir cuimhne a choinneáil ar an dóigh a rabh an t-uan sin in aice leis. (*Ben-Hur, Scéal fá Chríost*, p.72)
>
> si l'un d'eux avait perdu un agneau et n'omettait aucun détail, il ne faut pas oublier ce que le pauvre animal avait été pour lui: (*Ben-Hur*, p.49)

In the example above Mac Grianna translates the phrase *should be remembered* as *ba chóir cuimhne a choinneáil*, using the verb *coinneáil* to help establish as well as emphasise the notion of compulsion or obligation in remembering this particular act, that it *should* be remembered.

The following examples show Mac Grianna using the expression to translate variations on the use of the word 'mind' to indicate remembering.

> 'By the love-locks of Bacchus, have I not a bruised shoulder to help me keep it in mind?' and he seconded the words with a shrug that submerged his ears. (*Ben-Hur: a tale of the Christ*, p.199)
>
> Chraith an fear eile a ghuailneacha. 'Dar fholt Bhacchus go bhfuil, nó go bhfuil gualainn nimhneach agam le n-a choinneáil in mo chuimhne.' (*Ben-Hur: Scéal fá Chríost*, p.286)
>
> — Par les accroche-coeur de Bacchus, mon épaule contusionnée n'est-elle pas là pour m'en faire souvenir? — et une mimique expressive accompagna ces paroles.(*Ben-Hur*, p.231)

The above example, and the following one are fairly straightforward uses of *cuimhne a choinneáil* as meaning, in the first example *to keep in mind* and, in the second *to be mindful of*, although that expression of memory sounds a little archaic to our modern ears, and the word 'mindful' no longer has the act of remebering as a primary meaning in the modern language. The French translation, unusually, completely omits the translation of the whole notion of keeping or retaining this memory, allowing the verb *souvenir* to incorporate this meaning within its semantic range.

> We have been mindful of him, and forgotten not to pray at every sounding of the trumpets over in the Temple. (*Ben-Hur: a tale of the Christ*, p323)
>
> Choinnigh muid i gcuimhne É, agus ní dheárna muid dearmad ár n-urnaigh a rádh gach uair dar sheinn na galltrompaí thall ins an Teampall. (*Ben-Hur: Scéal fá Chríost* p.463)
>
> Nous ne l'avons point oublié, nous n'avons point omis de prier chaque fois que les trompettes du Temple ont sonné. (*Ben-Hur*, p.372)

The English expression *to call to mind* meaning *to remember* was contracted, in earlier times, to the word *mind* used as a verb to mean *remember*[82]. This usage was still very common in Ireland and Scotland, and is still used in these places today. In fact there are examples of this idiomatic usage in the *The Islanders*, translated by Mac Grianna as *Muintir an Oileáin*:

> **d'ye mind** the night of the tailor's raffle? (*The Islanders*, p.80)
>
> **An bhfuil cuimhne agat** ar an oidhche udaidh ag damhsa an táilliúra? (*Muintir an Oileáin*, p96),

as well as the following example of this idiomatic usage:

> **D'ye mind** when me an' you were out on that stran'? (*The Islanders* p.120)
>
> **An bhfuil cuimhne** agat nuair a bhí mise agus tusa amuigh ar an tráigh? (*Muintir an Oileáin*, p.148)

Mac Grianna translates the interrogative here with the static *an bhfuil cuimhne agat?* Conrad uses it idiomatically, and, appropriately, in the words of a character from Belfast, and Mac Grianna responds to this with the use of '*cuimhne a choinneáil'* to translate it. The French gives it the standard '*souvenir*', to remember.

> '**You moind**, me bhoy!' he concluded, cheerily. (*NN,* p.112)
>
> '**Coinnighigidh** cuimhne ar sin, a bhuachaill!' ar seisean go croidheamhail. (*MD,* p16.6)
>
> 'Souviens-toi de ça, mon gars!' conclut-il joyeusement. (*NN*, p.607)

In the example below from *Ben Hur*, Mac Grianna uses *coinnigh*, naturally enough to translate the 'kept' of 'kept them reminded'*.*

> His mere presence there day after day **kept them remind**ed of the covenants and the promises of the prophets, and the ages when Jehovah governed the tribes through the sons of Aaron; (*Ben-Hur: a tale of the Christ*, p.61)
>
> A fhad agus bhí a leithéid i láthair annsin, **bhí sé ag coinneáil i gcuimhne** daobhtha cuid margaidheacha agus cuid gealltanas na bhfáidh. Ní leigfeadh

[82] The Shorter Oxford English Dictionary (1983) (p.1327) gives the following in its definition of 'mind'. - To remember, to think of (a past or present object) *arch.* and *dial*. late ME.

> siad chun dearmaid an t-am a rabh Dia ‘ghá riaghladh fríd chlann Aaron. (*Ben-Hur: Scéal fá Chríost*, p.98)
>
> Sa seule présence, un jour après l’autre, **leur rappelait** les pactes de Dieu avec son peuple, les promesses des prophètes, le temps où Jéhovah gouvernait Israël par les enfants d’Aaron; (*Ben-Hur*, p.71)

In this case, Mac Grianna strengthens the idea of keeping hold of the memory by dividing the original sentence in two and adding ‘*ní leigfeadh said chun dearmaid’* to the beginning of the second sentence.

Below, in a sentence from *Coming thro’ the Rye*/*Ag Teacht fríd an tSeagal* he uses it similarly to translate ‘never permits you to forget’.

> It is bad enough to say no over and over again to a man, without having the word crystallized into a two-legged illustration, who struts up and down your little stage, an image of despair, and **never** for a **moment permits you to fo**rget that your being such a wretch to him, has brought him to this miserable pass! (*Comin’ thro’ the Rye*, p.247)
>
> Bhí sé dona go leór fear a dhiúltú arís agus arís, acht nuair a bhí sé in do cheann ar fad, **ag coinneáil in do chuimhn**e gur tú a thug go dtí an dóigh chráidhte seo é! (*Ag Teacht fríd an tSeagal*, p.380)

In the example below, Mac Grianna uses *coinnigh* in his translation of ‘carried the look in memory through life’, whereas the French translation changes from the act of remembering to that of not forgetting, using the verb *oublier*i n the negative.

> Then, as if he divined their feelings or heard the exclamation, the Nazarene turned his wan face towards the party, and looked at them each one, so they **carried the look in memory t**hrough life. (*Ben-Hur: a Tale of the Christ,* p.432)
>
> Mar thuigfeadh Sé a gcroidhe, nó mar chluinfeadh Sé an chainnt, thionntuigh an Nasarach A(sic) aghaidh snoidhte orthu, agus d’amhairc Sé ó dhuine go duine orthu, ins an dóig**h ar choinnigh siad cuimhne** le n-a saoghal air. (*Ben-Hur: Scéal fá Chríost,* p.616)
>
> Alors le Nazaréen, comme s’il eût deviné leurs pensées ou entendu cette exclamation, tournant vers eux son visage blême, les regarda l’un après l’autre; et ce regard**, ils ne l’oublièrent** de leur vie. (*Ben-Hur*, p.493)

Coinnigh, an active verb rather than the static *bhí cuimhne air*, is also used by Mac Grianna to show Almayer in the act of remembering, again emphasising the importance of these memories to him, and his obsession with them. Mac Grianna uses it alongside *bhí cuimhne aige air* to divide the passage into two distinct sections, that of the beginning of the active flow of memory followed by the series of

memories that float past. In addition, however, the use of the active verb along with *cuimhne*, in the three instances in which Mac Grianna employs it, places an emphatic structure around the beginning of Almayer's reverie. He uses it in the first sentence of the passage to establish the activity of the flood of memory in Almayer's mind: he then uses it as the emphatic, almost biblical, affirmative which begins a relatively long list of memories. In the original passage, at the end of this list, Conrad gives a summation of them as 'his very surroundings'. Mac Grianna expands this greatly by repeating *choinnigh sé cuimhne ar* at the beginning of the sentence to drive home the completeness and the clarity of the memory. Almayer has been completely transported back in time by this memory, the world of this memory has become clearer to him than the reality of his present existence.

Mac Grianna often divides Conrad's (in this case, first) sentence into two. Conrad has used a dash to separate his act of remembering from the memories themselves. Mac Grianna takes a different tack – he gives the act of remembering its own sentence to allow the reader to comprehend the importance of the act itself. Then, at the beginning of the next sentence, he repeats the verb, '*Choinnigh*', which in Irish has the force of an emphatic affirmative, such as 'Yes', or, perhaps more fittingly, a biblical-style 'Yea' to give emphasis to the act of remembering, and bring the reader into the list of memories that follow. The idiomatic construction using *coinnigh*, happily, brings with it its own built-in alliteration - ***c**uimhne a **c**hoinneáil*. Mac Grianna uses it twice more, for emphasising Almayer's first, clearest memories, and for the process of remembering itself. The more active verb *coinnigh* is used to describe the first outpourings of the flood of memories, and as this flood pools into a lake of memory, the more static *bhí* describes those memories that lurk within it.

The next set of memories which follow this employ the more static *bhí cuimhne aige air* four times, three in one sentence. This provides the pool of memory as it floods into Almayer's consciousness. In an echo of the emphatic affirmative of *coinnigh* in the second sentence of the passage, the final sentence repeats this effect with *bhí*, again perhaps with that biblical feel of 'Yea' – '*Bhí, bhí cuimhne aige ar an iomlán…*,' neatly tying together the two sets of memory, while clearly distinguishing between the two types. This distinction is Mac Grianna's own: Conrad gives a much more straightforward, and perhaps less poetic version than Mac Grianna – who has certainly responded to Conrad's lyricism here at full throttle.

A further effect is his use of alliteration and assonance, with which he enriches the translation of Conrad's original. Conrad has used some alliterative effects in the passage, with repetition of *s* and *g* sounds, for example: '**s**lanting deck… the **s**ilent **s**leeping coast…the **s**mooth black **s**urface of the **s**ea with a **g**reat bar of **g**old ….' These seem modest, even paltry, when compared to the welter of *bh*(/*v*/) and *c*(/*k*/)/*ch*(/*x*/) sounds to which Mac Grianna treats us. In case of *bh* (/*v*/)' sounds these are often provided by the *bhí* of *bhí cuimhne aige* and related phrases such as *a bhí ann* and *a bhí innte*. Since these words are not stressed within the sentence, they would not normally be described as part of the alliterative structure of the sentence. In this case, one could argue, however, that these repetitions are used deliberately by Mac Grianna. Although a natural part of Irish syntax, they are not part of the English original, and it would not have been difficult for Mac Grianna simply to have followed the list-like structure that Conrad uses. He chooses to expand it with noun phrases such **'***as ar an amharc a thug an seanduine air, agus ar an ghlór ar labhair sé ann, agus ar an chainnt a dubhairt sé, agus ar an dóigh ar mhéaduigh siad ar a aigneadh féin*' which incorporate alliteration and, inevitably, a rhythmic repetitiveness in the translation which does not exist in the original or in the French translation. There is some evidence that unstressed words have been used to provide alliteration in early Irish poetry. In 'Linking Alliteration ('Fidrad Freccomail') (1961) James Carney shows that unstressed words can be used for alliteration, in fact, this is what he terms 'the second main category', in other words, the second most common type of alliteration in early Irish poetry, or at least, in Carney's source text, the *Féilire* of Oengus:

> The second main category is that in which one or both of the alliterating elements are unaccented; the unaccented element may be a pretonic verbal particle, the negative particle *ní*, a possessive pronoun or a *preposition* (my italics). (p. 253)

Carney's subject is early Irish bardic poetry, which has very specific rules regarding rhyme scheme and literary effects, such as alliteration. It is a remarkable phenomenon that this very strict, rule-laden discipline allows the alliteration of unstressed words. With this in mind it might be possible not to rule out an alliterative quality in the repetition of the prepositions *ar* and *ag* by Mac Grianna in this case.

In ‘The Principles of Alliteration’ (1921/23), Osborn Bergin contends that, as far as alliteration in early Irish verse is concerned, there are two types of alliteration, phonetic and psychological. Psychological alliteration refers to effects of initial mutation, lenition and eclipsis on Irish words, in early Irish verse. He provides us with the following stipulation:

> On what then does alliteration in Irish depend? There are two factors, one phonetic, the other psychological. As a rule, if either is missing there is no alliteration. When b is matched with bh the sound is similar, though not identical; the latter is pro- nounced with the lips in the same position, except that closure is incomplete. So bd and mbdn can alliterate, for m is merely a nasalized b. The ear is satisfied, for the sounds are similar, and in each case the mind is aware of the radical b. But bhd does not alliterate with bhfdd, nor mdr with mbdn, for the psychological factor is wanting. So of other groups: d, dh and dt. The usage was fixed at a time when dh and th were dental. (1921-23, p.83)

This quite complicated concept of ‘psychological alliteration’, states, according to Bergin, that the lenited consonants provide a form of alliteration which, although not identical, is acceptable because the sound is similar, and the original initial or as, he terms it, the ‘radical’ letter is the same. The same is true of eclipsis, where the nasalized consonant can alliterate with the unnasalized one. In *Irish Syllablic Poetry, 1200-1600,* Eleanor Knott explains it thus:

> When a word is eclipsed the radical consonant counts for alliteration, e.g. *b* and *mb* alliterate; …Lenition does not prevent alliteration, except in the cases of *f*, *p* and *t*. As initial lenited *f* is silent it is ignored for alliteration, so that *fhlaith* alliterates with *lámh*, *fhir* with *ollamh*, *fhreagra* with *riot*. Lenited *p* alliterates [only with another lenited *p* or] with *f*; lenited *s* alliterates [only] with another lenited *s*. The double consonants *sb* (*sp*), *sd* (*st*), (*sg*) (*sc*), *sm* do not alliterate with one another or with any other consonant; *sb* alliterates only with another *sb*, and so on; *sl*, *sn*, *sr*, can alliterate with each other or with an *s* followed by a vowel. When *s* is eclipsed by *t* after the article it can alliterate only with another *s* similarly affected, thus *an tsíodh* with *an tsleagh*. (1928/1966, p.11)

These rules or principles with regard to alliteration in the Irish language stem originally from the poetic tradition of the bardic schools and the complicated and constantly evolving system of metre and inter-syllabic rhyme that proceeded from them.[83] Certainly the rules exist because in certain cases the initial sound of a word can change slightly, by being voiced or nasalized to some extent by the effects of

[83]See Murphy, G. (1961) *Early Irish Metrics* pp.36-39 for a full examination of this system.

lenition or eclipsis. The 'psychological' aspect of this seems to refer to the fact that the mind plays a part in determining alliteration, only allowing it to take place where words with the same initial or radical consonant are in play (with some exeptions in the case of *f* and *s*.) If the initial sound has been altered by lenition or eclipsis, that altered sound cannot alliterate with a word which has a radical consonant which is the same as the altered one, so that *b* and *mb* alliterate, but *mb* and *m* do not. In general, it seems the initial or radical letter will hold alliteration psycologically, despite any change through lenition or eclipsis.

Equally his use of *choinnigh* and *cuimhne*, to convey the concept of 'memory' accounts for a goodly proportion of *c* and *ch* sounds. However, in the sentence beginning *Bhí cuimhne aige ar an bhord chumhang*, the same sentence in which Conrad provides the majority of his alliteration, he brings both sounds together in a spate of consonantal and assonantal effects, the consonantal repetition vying with the *a* sounds from *aige* and *ar an*.

> **Bhí cuimhne aige ar** an **bh**ord **ch**umhang **a bhí ar** an **bh**ruig agus é **ar** fiar, **bhí cuimhne aige ar an ch**ladach **ch**iúin **a bhí** ina **ch**odladh, agus **bhí cuimhne aige ar an fhairrge** dhubh **ch**omhtrom **a bhí ann.**

In this sentence alone, there are eight 'bh' sounds and eight 'c' or 'ch' sounds, as well as nine 'ar' 'ar an' and 'a'sounds. In fact only three words in the sentence, '*fiar*' '*dhubh*' and '*fhairrge*', do not begin with one of these sounds, and two of those begin with the same letter 'f' or 'fh'. Although initial mutation may change the sounds of the letters slightly (lenition causing the 'f' not to be pronounced, for example), the visual effect is remarkable, and if the sentence were to be said aloud, as in the Gaelic story-telling tradition, the aural alliterative parallelism would be very much in force in the sentence. The preponderance of lenited consonants, particularly lenited nouns and adjectives, '*bhord chumhang, bhruig, chladach chiúin….ina chodladh, an fhairrge dhubh chothram*,' softens and blurs the sound of the plosive consonants, making them more sonorous to the ear, reflecting again a huge debt to the storytelling tradition that Mac Grianna's translating is revealing here. However, aside from his debt to this tradition, Mac Grianna employs rhythm and repetition to great effect, and in particular to illuminate a protagonist's feelings of loss and regret, as Conrad is showing us here, as he takes us into Almayer's thoughts and memories.

There is a similar use of repetition by Mac Grianna in, for example, *Dochartach Dhuibhlionna*, to show the protagonist's despair and desperation, where, in one paragraph of eight sentences, he creates an almost poetic metre, or pattern where the first four consecutive sentences begin with *shiúbhal, bhí bhí bhítear*, as do the four sentences that follow.[84]

This search for repetition effects has caused Mac Grianna to change Conrad's final sentence quite radically, translating ' at the thought of that fortune thrown into his hands' as *'nuair a smaointigh sé ar an tsaibhreas a chuir an chinneamhaint chuige*', which could translate literally as 'when he thought of the wealth that destiny/fortune had sent to him'. Mac Grianna's version again uses more alliteration than Conrad. He almost creates alliteration with *'smaointigh'* and '*tsaibhreas*' (albeit not according to Bergin's theory of psychological alliteration, nor according to Knott, where as we have seen, a'*t*' before an '*s*' prevents alliteration in any form) and continues the alliteration of '*ch*' that he has used lavishly throughout the extract, with *a chuir an chinneamhaint chuige*'. Here Mac Grianna fully translates the word 'fortune', which Conrad has used fairly narrowly in the sense of a large amount of money, without the other meaning of the word, that of 'destiny'. Mac Grianna adds this meaning to the sentence, personifying *'cinneamhaint'*, adding to the novel's theme of 'folly', showing Almayer at the mercy of fate, whether evil or good. With this beautiful final phrase, I feel that he has improved on, even outdone, Conrad, and has shown himself at least equal to him as a writer.

This one passage shows Mac Grianna's love of alliterative and rhythmic effects, but many further examples can be found of his desire to use these effects, even where they are not to be found within the original text, as the following examples from *An Máirnéalach Dubh* demonstrate.

The first example shows a nice instance of syllabic antithesis in the phrase *sgiathán throma fá mhuincilí geala* where the word *fá* separates two phrases of two words which comprise a three- followed by a two-syllable word, both two syllable plural words ending in *a.* This is followed by the alliterative phrase *gnaitheach ag*

[84] Dochtartach Duibhlionna p 19. For a full analysis the use of repetition and other literary effects, such as alliteration, and debt to the story-telling style in work of Séamus Ó Grianna, see Ó Corráin (1992) pp.94-107

gnothaidheacht, which might literally translate as ‘busy gesticulating’, a much more active and descriptive phrase, rather than Conrad’s plain *gesticulated*.

> big arms in white sleeves **gesticulated**;(*NN.* p.16)
>
> Sgiatháin throma fá mhuinchillí geala, ba iad a **bhí gnaitheach ag gothaidheacht!** (*MD,* p.7)
>
> des bras musclés **gesticulaient** dans les manches blanches; (*NN,* p.501)

Mac Grianna use the same effect of syllabic antithesis to describe the sewing of *a white patch on blue trousers,* as Conrad has fairly prosaically described it. Mac Grianna again separates two similarly weighted short descriptive phrases by a preposition, in this case *ar*:

> Archie, sitting aslant on his sea-chest, kept his knees out of the way, and pushed the needle steadily t**hrough a white patch in a pair of blue trousers.** (*NN,* p.16)
>
> Bhí ógánach darbh’ ainm Archie ina shuidhe ar fiar ar a chófra fairrge, agus a ghlúine crupaighthe amach as an bhealach aige, agus é i gcionn snáthaide go dicheallach, **ag cur paiste ghil ar bhríste ghorm.** (*MD,* p.8)
>
> Archie, assis de travers sur son coffre, les genoux hors du passage, enfonçait avec application son aiguille **dans une pièce blanche qu’il cousait sur un pantalon bleu**. (*NN,* p.501)

He again give us a rhythmic counterpoint of syllables on either side of the preposition, in this case providing alliteration in the adjectives *ghil* and *ghorm*, as well as the repetition of the sound *iste* in the nouns *paiste* and *briste*, whether fortuitously or not. It is also worth noting his delightfully ‘domesticated’ translation of *pushed the needle steadily* with *agus é i gcionn snáthaide go dicheallach,* which might be translated as ‘and him sewing diligently’.

In the next instance, Mac Grianna translates *a mop of tousled hair* with the alliterative phrase *grágán giobach gruaige*. *Grágán gruaige* is a standard phrase in Irish for a mop of hair, which is nicely alliterative, with each syllable beginning with a *g.* Mac Grianna adds to it with the added alliteration of the word *giobach*, which also repeats the syllable number with *grágán.* He follows this with a sentence which contains four alliterating sibilants at the beginning of words, (*stanadh, suas, spéarthaí, súile),* all of which are two-syllable words, with further alliteration of *a*

(*aislingeacha, aige*) which contain further internal alliteration of *g*. This sonic enhancement again outdoes Conrad's creation of absent-minded reverie in a young man, in *stared upwards, dreamy-eyed, from under a mop of tumbled hair*, expanding the word count by almost twice Conrad's amount.

> A Russian Finn, wearing a yellow shirt with pink stripes, stared upwards, dreamy-eyed, from under a **mop of tumbled hair.** (*NN*, p.16)
>
> Bhí Finneach ann agus léiní bhuidhe air a rabh stríoc bháindearg inntí, agus **grágán giobach gruaige** air, agus é ag stánú suas ins na spéarthaí agus súile aislingeacha aige. (*MD,* p.8)
>
> Un Russe de Finlande, vêtu d'une chemise jaune à rayures rosés, regardait en l'air, l'oeil rêveur sous **une tignasse ébouriffé**. (*NN,* p.501)

The example below demonstrates Mac Grianna's clever repetition of *agus iad* and *iad* in order to bring rhythm to Conrad's list. Here, we also have an example (of which there are many throughout the texts) of Mac Grianna's careful mirroring of Conrad's alliteration when he translates *smiling stupidly or scornfully* with *go dobhránta nó go droch-mheasamhail*.

> Men sitting doubled up in the upper bunks smoked short pipes, swinging bare brown feet above the heads of those who, sprawling below on sea-chests, listened, smiling stupidly or scornfully. (*NN,* p.18)
>
> Bhí fir ina suidhe 'na ngocaidí sna leabthacha uachtair **agus iad** ag caitheamh dúdóg, *iad* costár-nocht **agus iad** ag bogadh a gcuid cos buidhe os cionn na bhfear a bhí caithte ar na cófraí fútha, *agus iad* ag éisteacht go dobhránta nó go droch-mheasamhail. (*MD,* p.11)
>
> Des hommes assis plies en deux sur les cou-chettes supérieures fumaient de courtes pipes, tout en balançant leurs pieds nus brunis au-dessus de la tête de ceux qui, étalés en dessous sur les coffres, écoutaient avec un sourire stupide ou méprisant. (*NN,* p.503)

There is also an interesting example of Mac Grianna's use of the word '*buidhe'* to translate the 'brown' feet of the men. This word (*buí*, in the modern spelling) is normally translated as 'yellow', and the usual word to translate 'brown' would be '*donn*'. However, *FBG* gives *buí* also as 'tan' and 'sallow'[85] and a *buíochán*, as well as being the word for an egg-yolk and a primrose, also means 'a sallow-skinned person'.[86] '*Donn'* can mean 'tan'[87] but also means 'brown-haired', eg 'A brown-haired

[85] See *FBG* p. 155.
[86] *Ibid*, p.157.
[87] *Ibid* p.436.

girl' is '*cailín donn'*.[88] Mac Grianna, ever aware of alliterative effects, chooses *'buidhe'* to alliterate with *'bogadh'.*

The following example shows Mac Grianna once again using rhythmic techniques of alliteration to translate lyrical writing by Conrad, evoking the memory of home and England from one of the characters. Conrad does not employ any alliteration in this extract, but Mac Grianna's translation makes lavish use of the repetition of *c* and *ch* sounds.

> He saw stirring boughs of old trees outspread, and framing in their arch the tender, the caressing blueness of an English sky. (*NN*, p.29)
>
> **Ch**onnaic sé sean-**ch**rainn ag **c**rothadh a gcuid **c**raobhach, agus gorm **c**aoin **c**ineálta spéar na Sasana ris faoi stuaigh na ngéag. (*MD,* p.28)
>
> Il voyait remuer les branches déployées des vieux arbres dont la voûte enserrait le bleu tendre et caressant d'un ciel anglais. (*NN*, p.515)

The same can be said of the next example, where Mac Grianna repeats *ch* sounds, in a translation which is very much 'domesticated', in that it strays quite far from the source text:

> The wisdom of half a century spent listening to the thunder of the waves had spoken unconsciously through his old lips. (*NN*, p.31)
>
> I ganfhios dó, **ch**an a bhéal an **ch**iall a **ch**ruinnigh sé le leath-**ch**éad bliadhain ag éisteacht le tormán na dtonn. (*MD*, p.31)
>
> La sagesse d'un demi-siècle passé à écouter le tonnerre des vagues s'était exprimée inconsciemment par ses lèvres de vieillard. (*NN*, p.517)

Mac Grianna sentence translates literally as 'Unwittingly, his mouth spoke of the experience[89] he had gathered in a half-century listening to the noise of the waves'. '*Can*' means 'speak' but it also means 'sing', and this added meaning as well as the alliterative rhythm of '*chan a bhéal an chiall a chruinnigh sé le leath-chéad bliadhain*' gives the sentence a lyricism that is absent from Conrad's original.

Further repetition effects are evident below in Mac Grianna's repetition of *blaosc a bhí* to translate Conrad's repetition of *ever* and *always*. Mac Grianna is always searching for an equivalent, rather than a literal translation, which gives him these opportunities to be creative.

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[88] *Ibid* p. 436.
[89] *FBG*, p.224 gives '*ciall don saol'* to mean 'experience of life'.

> A great circular solitude moved with her, **ever changing and ever the same**, **always monotonous and always imposing**. (*NN*, p35)
>
> Shiubhail blaosg mhór uaigneach i dtimcheall na luinge — blaosc a bhí i gcómhnaidhe ag áthrach agus a bhí i gcómhnaidhe mar an gcéadna, **blaosc a bhí tuirseamhail** agus **blaosc a bhí uasal**.(*MD,* p.38)
>
> Une immense solitude circulaire se déplaçait avec le navire**, toujours changeante et toujours semblable, à jamais monotone et à jamais majestueus**e. (*NN*, p.521)

This is a very fine example of rhymthic and alliterative repetition which Mac Grianna has brought here from the storytelling tradition of his native Rann na Féirste, and which allows him here to expand upon and improve the rhythm of Conrad's original sentence. This rhythm is an intrinsic part of the *scéalaíocht* style, and can be found in the style of both the brothers Mac/Ó Grianna. An example from the famous opening chapter of *An Droma Mór* (1969) demonstrates this:

> 'Cluineadh **g**éimneach a **g**cuid **m**art agus **g**liogar a **g**cuid uirnisí **g**o **g**éar **g**linn i lár **m**hórfhuaimeanna na **m**ara.' (1969, p.2)

These alliterative and rhythmic effects are part of a style that comes from a tradition that is not only oral but aural. The listening audience is an important element in the tradition of *scéalaíocht*, and the experience is a shared one between storyteller and listening audience. Mac Grianna writes and translates for the ear, and also for the eye, for alliterative and assonantal effects are visual as well as aural. The conglomeration of the letter 'g' in the above example makes this sentence jump out visually to the reader, and it would also engage the ear of the listener.[90]

Perhaps every feat of translation by Mac Grianna can be characterised by his ability to 'evaluate' in Guildford's sense. He is, of course, a bilingual writer who read extensively in both English and Irish, and in the case of Conrad, we have evidence that Mac Grianna read many of his works.[91] Translation is a process of continuing evaluation, where the translator makes choices and decisions regarding how and even what he should translate from source to target text with regard to more or less every word within a text. Therefore every piece of translating by Mac Grianna from Conrad's works will show some form of careful evaluation and sensitivity to nuance

[90] For a full explanation of the debt to the storytelling style in the language of Mac Grianna's brother, Séamus Ó Grianna, see Ó Corráin (1992) pp.94-107

[91] See National Archives/GAEL/AN GUM/A0106

within the source text on Mac Grianna's part. The following examples may exemplify this, and ultimately reveal his writerly creativity shining through within translation.

One illustration of this might be the following translation of a rather unusual description by Conrad of the moon upon the water, where he has described it as 'a great bar of gold' which has been laid on the surface of the sea. Mac Grianna uses the word '*trillse'* to translate Conrad's 'gold bar' of the moon, an unusual way to describe the moon here, reminiscent of Rosetti's Blessed Damozel leaning out of the 'gold bar of heaven'. Although Conrad's image initially suggests that the moon has taken the form of a gold ingot, it would appear that Conrad is using the word *bar* in the (now) slightly unusual sense of' stripe' or 'streak', and the French translation *traînée*, meaning a streak or (vapour) trail would seem to confirm this.[92] Mac Grianna's word *trillse* seems to have two distinct meanings ,that of a 'tress' of hair and that of 'a three-branched torch or taper' and 'brilliance, radiance' in Dinneen [93], as well as 'tress' and 'torch' in *FGB*.[94] The adjective *trillseach* is given in *FGB* as 'Tressed, braided, plaited' for the primary meaning, as well as 'Glittering, bright'.[95] So, 'tress' and 'brilliance' seem to be the two basic meanings of the word. On further analysis of the examples of usage of the various forms of this word in *Tobar na Gaedhilge*, there is a third meaning however, that of 'rippling', and, interestingly, the word is used in this way to describe both curling, or long rippling hair and a watery light effect. This meaning is not included explcitly, in *FGB*[96] but may exist implicitly in the meaning of 'braided 'or 'plaited', as braids or plaits of hair have a rippled appearance, and hair which has become unplaited also has a very defined rippled effect.[97]

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[92] Bar can also mean 'a bank of sand, silt etc across the mouth of a river or harbour which obstructs navigation' Shorter Oxford Dictionary (1983, p.155). There may be an echo of this meaning in Conrad's usage.

[93]Dinneen's *Foclóir Gaeilge agus Béarla* (1904) gives the following definitions: Trillis, - e, *f* a three-branched torch or taper; brilliance, radiance, Trillis –lse, *f* a long head of hair, long tresses (p.755).

[94] Trilis *f* (gs and pl - lse.) --**1**. Tressed **2** Torch (*FGB*, p.1271).

[95] trilseach, a1. 1. Tressed, braided, plaited. 2. Glittering, bright (*ibid*).

[96] The following definitions from *FBG* show cognates of *trillis*: trilseán, m. (gs. & npl. -áin, gpl. ~).1. Tress; braid, plait. 2. (a) Plaited rushlight. (b) Link, torch. 3. String, long bunch. ~ oinniún, string of onions. and trilsigh1, v.t. & i. (vn. -iú m, gs. -ithe). 1. Braid, plait. 2. Glitter, sparkle (p.1271).

[97] This meaning may also be found in the lyrics of the song *Bríd Ó Ní Mháille* where the line is 'Ó siúd mar bíos mo ghrá-sa/Níos trilsí le breáchtacht'

It is possible that Mac Grianna intends all three meanings to be at play in this instance. It seems fairly clear that he is using (in dictionary terms) the secondary meaning of the word as his primary one here. He seems to have a predilection for this meaning, certainly using it in his translations much more than his brother, for example, who seems to prefer the primary meaning of *tress*. A comparison can be made about the usage by Seosamh Mac Grianna and his brother Séamus Ó Grianna of the word *trillse* and its variants. If we make a comparison of their works available on *Tobar na Gaedhilge* we can see that Ó Grianna, with 10 usages on *Tobar na Gaedhilge*, uses it almost exclusively with the meaning *tress* and Mac Grianna's four uses are almost exclusively with the meaning of *brilliance*. They both provide one example where they use it to translate 'fold' or 'wrinkle', a meaning which is presumably cognate with 'tress', although, it may also expand to the idea of the folds or wrinkles having a rippling effect. However, as *Tobar na Gaedhilge* contains 19 texts (16 original, 3 translated) from Séamus Ó Grianna and only 12 (5 original, 7 translated[98]) from Seosamh Mac Grianna, weighting the odds very much in Séamus's favour, this comparison may be invidious. Nevertheless, it may possibly indicate a marked ideolectical preference which is different in each brother.

Séamus Ó Grianna makes the connection between the smoothness of silken fabric and the word 'trillseach', in the following example:

> Et puis, le sommeil étant venu tout de même, malgré l'amour et malgré l'envie de pleurer, elle se jeta brusquement dans son lit, en se cachant la figure **dans cette masse soyeuse de ses cheveux,** qui était déployée à présent comme un voile (*Pêcheur d'Islande*, p.59)
>
> Acht sa deireadh tháinig an codladh uirthí, dh'aindeoin an ghrádha agus dh'aindeoin na cúmhaidhe. Chaith sí í féin go gasta isteach sa leabaidh agus thuit sí i n-a codladh. Bhí sí i n-a luighe annsin agus a h-aghaidh foluighthe a**g na trillsí míne** mar bhéadh braithlín anuas uirthí (*Iascaire Inse Tuile,* p.50)
>
> And sleep having come, notwithstanding love and an impulse to weep, she threw herself roughly in her bed, hiding her face in the **silken masses floating** round her outspread like a veil. (*Iceland Fisherman*, p.53*)*

An interesting usage of *trillseach* is that by Séamus Ó Grianna to describe a moiré silk fabric, which he translates as *síoda thrillseach*:

[98] *Seidean Bruithe/ Amy Foster* counted as one work, as they were originally published in the same volume as *Typhoon/Amy Foster*.

> le teint d'une blancheur insolente, le cou dégagé, les bras tombant le long de son tablier de **moiré**, (*La Terre qui Meurt,* p.125)
>
> her dazzlingly white complexion and uncovered throat. Erect, with arms pendant on either side of the **moiré** apron, (*Autumn Glory* (*La Terre qui Meurt*, p.139)
>
> Bhí a muineál ris ós cionn bhrollach a culaith. Bhí a lámha síos ar an naprann de **shíoda thrillseach** a bhí uirthi, agus í bán san aghaidh, de bháine a rabh rud éighinteacht dolba innti. (*Faoi Chrann Smola,* p.157)

Moiré is a type of silk that has been treated to give it a watery or 'rippled' effect[99] and this may be a rarer example of Ó Grianna using the word in this way.

Again this brings us to the possible double or triple meaning within Mac Grianna's translation. On the face of it, *trillse óir* can back-translate as 'gold(en) brilliance/radiance'. An alternative could be 'gold tress/curl.' Probably the best and most apt back translation is that of 'golden ripple'. This range of usage for the word and it derivatives is noteworthy - the basic meanings of 'curl' and 'brilliance' seem to combine to give the meaning of a ripple, used by Mac Grianna as 'a ripple of light', rather than the ripple of curly tresses, which seems to be the most common usage by his brother.

Mac Grianna extends the semantic range further by his use of the word to mean any form of light which is unstable and flickering, as demonstrated in the following examples:

> one can just move along at leisure, enjoying the air, the sky, and **the light that quivers** on the path through boughs that meet coolly overhead. (*Comin' thro' the Rye* p56)
>
> Thig le duine bogadh leis ar a shuaimhneas, agus a mhór a dheánamh den aer, agus den spéir agus **den tsolas atá 'na thrillsí** ar an chamhsa i ndiaidh sileadh fríd ghéaga na gcrann ós do chionn. (*Ag Teacht fríd an tSeagal* p82)

There is another example of similar usage in *Muintir an Oileáin* (*The Islanders* by Peadar O'Donnell):

> The waters of the Bay **darkened here to shade, there brightened to a sunbeam**. (*The Islanders* p 90)
>
> Bhí uisge an chuain **i n-a thrillsí solais eadar sgáilí**. (*Muintir an Oileáin* p87)

[99] *The Shorter Oxford Dictionary*(1983) gives the following definition: '1818 FR. pa. pple. of moirer give a watered appearance to A:adj: of silk: Watered. Of metals: having a watered or clouded appearance B: sb. A variegated or clouded appearance like that of watered silk esp. on metals.' (p.1344)

It may be assumed that *ina thrillsí* is an expression, for Mac Grianna at least, which indicates a form of flickering, of moving quickly from light to dark, which does not appear as part of the dictionary definition of the word. The word is also used with this meaning by Niall Ó Dónaill (compiler of *FGB*) in *Scairt an Dúthchais,* his translation of Jack London's novel *The Call of the Wild*, in the following example:

> And as they continued to fall upon him, the spark of life within **flickered** and went down. (*The Call of the Wild,* p.57)
>
> Bhí siad ag tuitim go fras air, agus le n-a linn bhí drithleóg na beatha **ag lag-thrillseadh** agus ag gabháil síos ann. (*Scairt an Dúthchais,* p.148)
>
> Et comme ils continuaient à l'accabler, l'étincelle de vie qu'il avait encore en lui **vacilla** et fut près de s'éteindre. (*L'Appel Sauvage,* p.104)

It may be understood from these usages by both Mac Grianna and Ó Dónaill that *trillse*, or *trillseadh* can mean, respectively, 'a flicker' or 'to flicker'. In the following two examples we find both brothers Uí Ghrianna extending the semantic range of the word's meaning of 'curl' to mean folds or wrinkles. This first example comes from Seosamh in *Ivanhoe*:

> He had exchanged his shirt of mail for an under tunic of dark purple silk, garnished with furs, over which flowed his long robe of spotless white, **in ample folds**. (*Ivanhoe* p.63)
>
> Bhain sé de a léiní chruadhach agus chuir sé air ionair de shíoda dhubh-dhearg, agus fionnadh uirthe, agus casóg fhada gheal os a ceann **a rabh trillsí fada fairsinge innte**. (*Ivanhoe*, p.45)
>
> Il avait changé sa cotte de mailles contre une veste de soie pourpre foncé, garnie de fourrures, sur laquelle flottait **en plis abondants** sa longue robe entièrement blanche. (*Ivanhoe*, p.70)

This second example comes from Séamus in *Faoi Chrann Smola:*

> **Des rides sillonnaient le front et coupaient l'intervalle entre les sourcils**. (*La Terre qui Meurt*, p.19)
>
> His forehead was lined with wrinkles which made **deep furrows between the eyebrows**. (*Autumn Glory* (*La Terre qui Meurt*), p.26)
>
> Bhí a éadan anuas go dtí **eadar na mailidheacha trillsighthe le ruicneacha**. (*Faoi Chrann Smola*, p.27)

These meanings are not included in any dictionary for the word, and it is only through their use within translation that we find this conclusive evidence for these additions to their semantic range. The following example from Níall Ó Dónaill

illustrates the word being used in its sense of being ‘glittering’, or ‘bright’, as stated in his dictionary:

> I seemed to see this fair girl form — the yellow hair streaming down her, **glittering against her garments snowy white**, and the bosom that was whiter than the robes, even dimming with its lustre her ornaments of burnished gold. (*She,* p.85)
>
> Chonnaictheas damh go bhfaca mé cailín dóigheamhail — cailín a rabh folt óir ina dlaoithe lonnracha anuas ar a héideadh geal, agus ar a braghaid a ba ghile; **folt a ba trillsighe** ná na hórdnáidí den ór laisge a bhí fá n-a pearsain. (*Ise,* p.227)
>
> Cette adorable fille, je croyais la voir, ses cheveux blonds ruisselant sur les épaules qui rivalisaient avec la pâleur neigeuse de son vêtement; le sein plus blanc encore que la robe, **surpassait en éclat ses parures d’or bruni**; (*Elle,* p.285)

There is an expansion to this meaning, however, which involves the uncharted (by the dictionary) meaning of ‘rippling’, which we saw Mac Grianna use in the example from *Dith Chéille Almayer*. In this case the word ‘rippling’ is being used by Ó Dónaill to describe hair, and is cognate with the meaning of ‘curl’, which is the primary meaning of the word.

> But we went to the pile of rippling hair that had fallen from her in the agony of that hideous change which was worse than a thousand natural deaths, and each of us drew from it a shining lock, (*She* p.298)
>
> Ach chuadhamar go dtí an moll trillseach gruaige, agus thug gach duine againn leis dlaoidheóg díthe. (*Ise* p.352)
>
> Mais nous nous approchâmes du tas de cheveux bouclés qui s’était détaché d’elle pendant l’horreur de cette hideuse transformation, pire que mille morts naturelles; nous en tirâmes chacun une boucle brillante; (*Elle* p.462)

The expansion then comes, as we can see in the following examples from Domhnaill Mac Grianna where the idea of ‘rippling hair’ becomes extended to that of ‘rippling water’:

> The bright green flats looked so strange with the yellow water rippling and rushing between them. (*Robbery Under Arms,* p.207)
>
> Bhí cuma iongantach ar na srathannaí fíor-ghlasa, agus an t-uisge buidhe ag cartughadh go trillseach eatortha. (*Gadaidheacht le Láimh Láidir* p.386)

and also:

> We had two or three little creeks to cross, and they were pretty full, except at the crossing places, and rippled over the stones and sparkled in the sun like the brooks we'd heard tell of in the old country. (*Robbery Under Arms* p.363)
>
> B'éigean dúinn a ghabhail thar a dhó nó trí 'chamuis bheaga, agus amach ó'n áit a rabh na feirsde orthú bhí siad gearr lán, agus an t-uisge trillseach ina rith thar na clocha agus é ag deallradh ins an ghréin cosamhail leis na srutháin a bhí sa tsean-tír ar chualamar iomrádh ortha. (*Gadaidheacht le Láimh Láidir* p.606)

This usage seems to combine the two primary meanings of 'curl' and 'glitter', which in themselves are connected in the sense that the spiralled nature of a curled tress seems to recall the instability, the flashing nature of something that glitters. On an initial reading, Mac Grianna's translation of Conrad's 'gold bar' as 'trillse óir' seems strange – is he describing it as a 'gold curl' or a 'golden glitter'? The first is an unusual, the latter a plausible translation. It is when the full semantic range of the word becomes clear, and we find the connection from the 'ripple' of curling hair to the sparkling 'ripple' of water, that we can applaud his ability, once again, to provide the 'mot juste' within Conrad's unusual usage in the source text. Mac Grianna here demonstrates his ability to 'evaluate', in Guildford's sense, through his capacity comprehensively to understand Conrad's meaning, even when, as here, it may be a little obscure and then to draw, from that seemingly bottomless well, or '*tobar*' of language that he carried with him, and employed so fruitfully in all his works, not least in his translations.

Guildford's inclusion of 'restraint' as part of his 'break-down', as it were, of the qualities which combine to give creativity, is unusual. He seems to imply that the creative person will have an internal self-monitoring system, which provides a level of finer judgment and discrimination, which contributes to high standards of creativity. As noted above, some critics believe that restraint, or constraint, actually improves levels of creativity, as if placing a spur or constriction on the flow of creativity, putting in place certain rules to follow concentrates the creative juices and, to some degree, forces through a measure of creativity. Whether restraint is possible for the translator is difficult to assess. The translator must of necessity render the source text as completely as possible. Omissions are usually a necessary evil of translation, usually cases where the source and target language reach a level of imcompatibility which cannot be overcome. Can it therefore be posited that the ability to discriminate as to when an omission should be made be

construed as a measure of Guildford's 'restraint' in a translator? Close textual reading reveals that Mac Grianna made many omissions, small and large, in his translations. We have evidence that he was taken to task for his translation of *Almayer's Folly* (*Dith Chéille Almayer*), and that one of the charges laid against him was the amount of the source text that he did not translate, that is to say, that he omitted various parts of the novel, to a greater or lesser extent.[100] It might be argued that Mac Grianna's story-telling and writerly instincts and abilities allowed him to assess what was necessary and what unnecessary to include in order to allow the story to progress in a readable way.

One form of restraint or constraint which was imposed upon Mac Grianna and which may be interpreted as a 'restriction' or constraint imposed from the outside, and which may have prompted Mac Grianna to omit certain small lexical items, was that of the necessity of aiming the translations towards the target audience for Scéim Aistriúcháin an Ghúm, so clarity of language was a watchword for these translations from An Gúm. There is an implication here that translators on An Gúm had tacit permission to 'simplify' the source text when rendering it into the target language, in other words to restrict the level of lexical and grammatical complexity in the Irish language target text in order to allow it to be read fluently and without difficulty . This again is difficult, indeed, impossible to define and quantify: the definition of 'simplification' and what constitutes 'simple' language, and making a judgment as to whether such an act of 'simplification' had actually been carried out, would be a futile and thankless undertaking.

Omissions and simplification being difficult to define, quantify and access, it is then necessary to find another approach to Mac Grianna's restraint, or his judgment and discrimination. It might be argued that the care that he takes with even the smallest phrases might demonstrate his strong, unerring creative ability to judge the best choices within his translations. Looking at the translation of Conrad's 'small white clouds snared in maze of ropes'(*NN*, p.33), which as rendered by Mac Grianna as *néaltaí beaga bána ceaptha in eangach rópaí* (*MD* p.35) there is what appears a simple, effortless and almost inevitable translation from English into Irish, and not one which would give the learner of Irish any trouble. Yet on closer inspection a

[100]See National Archives/GAEL/AN GUM/A0106. Y

range of choices that Mac Grianna makes becomes clear. Each word in the sentence is comprised of two syllables, providing an almost sing-song rhythm to the phrase. Five internal words of two syllables which end in an *a* sound (the *ch* or */x/* of eangach can be silent in Donegal Irish) are topped and tailed by two two-syllable words which end in *aí*. The result is a rhythmic lilting effect. His choice of *néaltaí* rather than *scamaill* gives him the *aí* ending which provides the co-ordinating rhythm with the concluding word *rópaí*. The vowel sound *ea* is repeated in each alternating word, *beaga, ceaptha, eangach*. To translate the word *maze*, he uses the word *eangach* which means 'fishing net', which is appropriate for the marine setting of the passage. It is clear that these choices, made in a phrase of merely eight words, demonstrate the level of judgment and discrimination in the construction of a simple phrase that Mac Grianna brings into play. He brings the same level of good translatory judgment to the simplest of phrases, showing the care with which the creative writer within him takes, with even, what may have been to him, a routine piece of hired work.

Conclusion

On examining Mac Grianna's creativity, it seems to shine through in the Conrad translations, and that there is a clear stamp of the writer's own style on much of the translation work he carried out for An Gúm. His identity comes through even though as a translator, he may be expected to remain invisible, as Nikolau points out:

> With literary translation, …attitudes shift: it is writing *minus the self* that makes the product of translation a translation: a principle of self-suppression is what should guide its processes. The translator's sense of identity is inevitably there, but crouching under another poetic sensibility and sculpting its statue;…translators have to be literary non-beings, applying a (self-)imposed doctrine of containment, functioning as textual psychics, only speaking in the tongues of others. (2006, p.20)

This 'self-supression' is not required from Mac Grianna, who, as a celebrated writer, did not have to experience anonymity in the marketing of his translated works,but who, as a translator, was expected to provide a 'good' translation, what would now be considered 'domesticated', and one which would favour the target language, Irish, over the source language, English. Bearing in mind the linguistic nationalism of his contemporary commentators on translation such as Peadar Ó Laoghaire and Gearóid Ó Nualláin, the prevailing opinion of the time might have been that Mac

Grianna would be in a position to show that the Irish language was at least ‘equal to’, if not ‘better than’ English. This would not be achieved by a startling ‘foreignisation’ of his translation, but the search for the ever-elusive ‘equivalent effect’.

In the case of Mac Grianna as a translator, however, it would seem that however much he might try to remove his identity or be objective, his creativity keeps bubbling up into the translated text. In this chapter, an examination of Mac Grianna’s translations, with regard to Guildford’s assessment of the qualities that contribute towards creativity, even a cursory search discovers that he fulfils each one of these nine criteria or qualities. His deep knowledge of the story-telling tradition of the Donegal Gaeltacht is brought to bear on these translations, so that his use of its techniques such a repetition and alliteration and his expansive use of vocabulary, with individualistic translations of words which are not found in dictionaries, at least not in exactly the way he uses them, gives his translations a flavour not easy to replicate. Many of his usages seem to be peculiar to him, and indicate a high level of creativity, which, in light of his creativity as a writer, is what we should surely expect from him. Mac Grianna’s creativity is challenged by Conrad’s prolix style of English, and the challenges that style poses Mac Grianna are examined in the next chapter.

Chapter 4: The Challenges of Conrad's Style

Introduction: Aspects of Conrad's Style

In translating Conrad, the biggest challenge that faces Mac Grianna is the transposition of his style into an acceptable form of Irish. This presents him with a two-fold problem, namely, how to deal with the deliberate complexities of his style and the acceptability of the Irish that he could use in order to translate it. This chapter will examine in some detail some of those aspects of Conrad's style which are considered peculiar to him, namely, his multi-linguistic background, his use of pre-verbal negative adjectives, and of long adnominal clauses. In addition, it will examine contemporaneous opinions on what constituted 'bad Irish' and the impact this may have had on the translations. An examination of Mac Grianna's translations of 'searbh' and 'garbh' can throw light on the famous opening sentence of *Mo Bhealach Féin*.

In creating his complex style in the English language, it should not be forgotten that Conrad himself was a translator. As a non-native speaker of English, his books can be seen as translations of Polish and French. Lucas (2000, p.3) makes the point that:

> ..he was constantly searching for the most effective word or phrase, and he searched not only the resources of his own mind, but also the works of other writers, particularly French writers, from whom he borrowed extensively on all levels – lexis, syntax, plot, theme, characterisation and dramatic incident…his borrowing from them on the levels of lexis and syntax involved, of course, translation; and it seems that as his literary career progressed….he became more proficient as a translator.

The notion of Conrad, ironically, as a translator of his own work provides another ingredient to the complex stew of style that Mac Grianna had to contend with when making his translations. It can be argued that all creativity is a form of translation of the artist's influences, but Conrad's creative translations of influences from other authors is compounded by the fact of his actual translation of these influences from one language into another.

In looking at the complexities of Conrad's style, its origins must be taken into account. It is fully documented that Joseph Conrad was a fluent speaker of French[101] and was a great admirer of the nineteenth century French writers Gustave Flaubert, Guy de Maupassant and Anatole France. *Almayer's Folly* shows the direct influence of Flaubert's novel *Madame Bovary*[102] and that the same is true of the influence of Maupassant's story *Bel Ami* on aspects of *The Nigger of the Narcissus.*[103] Certainly, thematically, these stories have many similarities, especially in the case of the former, with Almayer's delusions, his 'folly', echoing Emma Bovary's: as well as such thematic similarities, there are also similarities of language, which have been demonstrated by Hervouet in *The French Face of Joseph Conrad* (1990), and which can reverberate in Mac Grianna's translation.

Hervouet cites a large amount of testimonial evidence about Conrad's love of French literature in general and of the writing of Flaubert, Maupassant and France in particular, and states that

> …the references and allusions to Flaubert and Maupassant sprinkled throughout Conrad's correspondence and his critical and autobiographical writings make it clear that he learned his craft from them and constantly used their works (Flaubert's in particular) as his touchstone. (1990, p.10)

He also quotes a telling line from Conrad's correspondence with regard to the influence of such French models upon his writing in the English language: 'Moi qui suis, sans me vanter, saturé de Maupassant, j'ai été étonné de l'allure maupassantesque que l'on peut donner à la prose anglaise' (quoted in Hervouet 1990, p.14) which seems to confirm his appropriation of Maupassant's elliptical and ironic style, which, to his mind, fits very well with the English language. The French translations of the text often demonstrate how closely and literally the texts take on the mantle of the English originals, indicating how tightly Conrad's English and French merge in his literary output. In the case of arguably the least of these three writers (certainly in terms of status and reputation outside of France), Anatole France, Hervouet quotes one of Conrad's correspondents as saying 'I do not suppose he thought that Anatole France […was] in the first flight of creative artists, but he delighted in [his] beautiful clarity;…) (quoted in Hervouet 1990 p.15),

[101] Hervouet, (1990), p.7.
[102] *Ibid.* pp.19-23.
[103] *Ibid*.pp.39-49.

demonstrating how Conrad is as interested in style as theme when he uses these writers as his models, notwithstanding the similarity of theme between *Madame Bovary* and *Almayer's Folly*.

Thematically, therefore, there is much to compare between Conrad's works and those of the three French writers, but Hervouet also finds instances where Conrad seems to borrow (no doubt unconsciously, being, to borrow his own word, 'saturé' in their work) actual phrases from their works. One example Hervouet finds is strikingly similar – Almayer boasts of the soundness of his house (his 'folly') to visiting naval officers ' surrounded by a circle of glittering uniforms, [he] stamped his foot to show the solidity of the neatly-fitting floors and expatiated upon the beauties and convenience of the building' (*AF*, p.20) and Homais, a character in *Madame Bovary,* speaks in similar vein about a similar subject: 'Il expliquait á la compagnie l'importance future de cet établissement, supputait la force des plancher.'(quoted in Hervouet, 1990, p.19). Hervouet also notes that: 'The presence of Flaubert and Maupassant is very conspicuous throughout Conrad's third novel, his first major achievement, *The Nigger of the Narcissus*' (1990, p.39), citing specifically Flaubert's *Salammbô* and *Madame Bovary* (1990, p.41) as influences on this novel.

In taking on the task of translating Conrad, Mac Grianna is in fact taking on the translation of the style of nineteenth century literature, in a literal sense, since Conrad does replicate sentences from these authors whom he admires and no doubt these borrowings are probably the subconscious subsuming of much-read and much-loved works by the young Conrad. Another example Hervouet gives is that of Nina in *Amayer's Folly* echoing the feeling of Emma Bovary, even to the extent of using the same words and images to express feelings of helplessness: Nina sees 'the narrow mantle of civilized morality […] fall away and leave her shivering and *helpless* as if at the edge of some deep and *unknown abyss*' while, in the case of Emma Bovary, 'elle se sentait *perdue*, roulant au hazard dans des *abîmes indéfinissables*' (Hervouet's italics, in both cases p.20).The abyss is a theme in Conrad, Smoller (1969) tells us that:

> Conrad's settings in the period between 1895 and 1910 abound with chasms, voids, pits, holes, and abysses…the image of the abyss represents – according to theme and context, chaos, reality and nothingness: the true destructive elements for the Almayers and Jims, who do not, unlike Singleton and McWhirr 'steer with care' or 'face it'.(1969, p.262)

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In translating *Almayer's Folly*, Mac Grianna chooses to take the opposite tack, and describes Nina as feeling 'ar bharr beinne móire', 'on the edge of a big cliff'. He could simply have used 'duibheagán' and yet in this case he avoids this word. In the three other examples recorded in *Tobar na Gaedhlige,* he omits to translate the word in one instance and uses 'poll urchóide' in another instance and 'doimhne' in the third instance.[104]

> and saw with vague surprise the narrow mantle of civilised morality, in which good-meaning people had wrapped her young soul, fall away and leave her shivering and helpless as if on the edge of some deep and **unknown abyss**.(*AlF*, p.42)
>
> Bhí iongantas uirthe nuair a mhothuigh sí an tseithche shíbhéalta a chuir daoine cneasta uirthe, nuair a mhothuigh sí ag imtheacht í, agus fágadh i n-a seasamh go lag agus gan chuidiughadh í mar bhéadh sí **ar bharr beinne móire.** (*DA*, p.57)
>
> et voyait, vaguement surprise, l'étroit manteau de morale civilisée dans lequel des gens bien intentionnés avaient enveloppé sa jeune âme glis-ser de ses épaules, la laissant frissonnante et désarmée comme au bord de quelque profond **abîme inconnu.** (*FA*, p.37)

A cliff is surrounded by its 'edge', whereas the abyss is the depths below. *Barr* can mean *tip* or *point.* Mac Grianna has situated the charater of Nina rather more accurately than Conrad, at the cliff's edge, rather than at the edge of the abyss. An example perhaps of Mac Grianna's idiosyncratic creativity, as it is difficult to see why he did not directly translate this image: Mac Grianna's image leaves Nina teetering at the top of a big mountain, not 'at the edge of some deep and unknown abyss.' Mac Grianna has chosen to emphasise the height from which Nina might fall rather than the depths into which she might plunge:

Conrad's De-verbal Negative Adjectives

The stylistic influence of French writers on Conrad, coupled with his fluency in the language, contributed to a writing style which has been described as 'an adjectival style, and its best efforts hang upon rich accumulation' (E.K. Brown in Senn, 1980 p. 13). Senn however makes the point that Conrad's style,

[104] See *Tobar na Gaedhlige* for 'abyss' and 'duibheagán'.

quantitatively, contains no more adjectives than many of his contemporaries and therefore this difference comes with what he describes as 'the prominence this word class is given both on the paradigmatic and syntagmatic levels.' (1980, p.14). He goes on to say

> The impression that even a casual reader probably carries away from a story like 'Heart of Darkness' is that Conrad uses a great deal of 'weighty', polysyllabic adjectives, and that he gives adjectives in general a special emphasis by stringing them together into series or placing them in unusual syntactic positions: in other words, selection and combination and not absolute frequencies, are decisive for the effects achieved.(1980, p.14)

In particular, Senn demonstrates Conrad's preference for, and extensive use of what he describes as 'deverbal negative adjectives', giving 'impenetrable' as an example of the type, saying:

> Even though he did not create any neologisms in this area, this writer usually praised for extraordinary visual imagination often seems to go out of his way to describe an object by what it is not, evoking a visual or generally sensory aspect only to deny its presence in the object or event under view (1980 p. 26).

He describes these adjectives thus:

> The adjectives of the type 'impenetrable' form a special, morphologically defined subclass of the negative adjectives and are here called deverbal negative adjectives, because the greatest part of them derive from a (usually transitive) verb whether they are of native origin or French or Latin loanwords. (1980 p.27).

Senn also attributes this tendency to Conrad's intimate knowledge of French and its influence on his thinking and means of expression.[105] This, of course, means that in translating Conrad, Mac Grianna could be faced with a larger and more significant vocabulary of these types of deverbal negative adjectives than he might have to deal with in other translations.

There are various negative prefixes in Irish: examples are the prefixes *neamh-mí-, an-, dí-, do-, éa-* which can equate to in-, non- and un- in English, and the preposition *gan* which can mean *without* or *-less*, the English suffix in words such as *meaningless*, although, as has been demonstrated in Chapter Two, Mac Grianna uses this preposition widely and stretches the word lyrically throughout these translations. He does employ these forms in translating Conrad's adjectives, but

[105] Senn (1980) p.27.

often he searches for a more appropriate equivalent, demonstrating a high level of bi-lingual understanding within the two langugages. The following are some examples of how Mac Grianna deals with some of the more unusual of Conrad's deverbal negative adjectives, including' inglorious', 'immeasurable', 'impenetrable', 'unbounded', 'unringing', 'unseeing' and (although not deverbal adjectives as such) 'unquiet' and 'voiceless'.

Inglorious

This word has a wide semantic range and can often be used ironically to create a certain amount of bathos. A dictionary definition is as follows

> Inglorious…2 Bringing no glory (to a person); hence, shameful, disgraceful, ignominious (*Shorter Oxford Dictionary,* 1983, p1072)

Dictionary.com[106] gives the following synonyms: 'shameful, dishonourable, ignominious, discreditable, disgraceful, humiliating, mortifying, demeaning, shaming, ignoble, abject, unheroic, undignified, wretched, shabby;scandalous, shocking',as well as the following examples of usage:'an inglorious retreat,' 'inglorious though the peasants may have been, this is not synonymous with mute.' It is clear from the list of synonyms that the word has a broad semantic range, and this range of meaning gives a much larger span of meaning than merely that of 'not glorious.' Conrad's use of a word such as 'inglorious' is idiosyncratic and sometimes ironic. He certainly incorporates all the synonyms listed above within his usage, with the possible exception of *scandalous* or *shocking*. The word itself appears to be a simple antonym of the adjective 'glorious' but, again, as is evident from its synonyms, its semantic range is much wider than that. The word in French translates as *déshonorant(e),* but dictionary examples of actual usage (context sentences) often translate it as *sans gloire* (as in the French examples below) and also *peu glorieux(se)*, which can both have ironic, mocking overtones, but this direct translation is not used in the French translations of Conrad, perhaps an indication that the word in French is becoming obsolete, or at least, is not commonly used, as is the case in English. The following are more modern contextual usages for the word in French:[107]

[106] https://www.dictionary.com/ /inglorious 26/09/18
[107] http://context.reverso.net/translation/english-french/inglorious 26/09/18

> Ten days later, an **inglorious** coup regrettably put an end to these efforts.
>
> Dix jours plus tard, un coup d'État **sans gloire** mettait un terme regrettable à ces efforts.
>
> In view of the i**nglorious** history of the European Police College's financial conduct, it is essential that a detailed review is carried out.
>
> Au vu du passé **peu flatteur** du Collège Européen de Police dans le domaine financier, il convient de procéder à un examen détaillé.
>
> Montenegro's role is especially **inglorious,** for it has become Europe's main hub for tobacco smuggling, with the State taking a generous cut.
>
> Le rôle du Monténégro est particulièrement **honteux**, parce qu'il est devenu la plaque tournante du tabac de contrebande, dont l'État profite lui aussi grassement.

These French usages may reflect Conrad's ironic usage: like them, his use of the word generally contains a note of disapproval, of censure, of world-weary disgust. Mac Grianna, therefore, is faced with the task of coming up with an acceptable and domesticated translation of a word that, even by the nineteen thirties when he was translating Conrad, had become, in English, somewhat old-fashioned, and might only be used with an element of irony attached to it. It may have had this ironic overtone even early in the twentieth century, when Conrad employs it. Mac Grianna's translation is alive to his ironic tone, as is demonstrated in the following examples. On the face of it, it might be assumed or expected that Mac Grianna might use something like *gan ghlóir* or *neamhghlórmhar* - given as a direct translation in *FGB,* p.904) as a translation, but his high level of bi-lingual skill makes him acutely sensitive to the range of meaning within this adjective. In the following two examples he does not slavishly follow the literal translation of the word in this way but finds equivalents that not only translate correctly but also add to the lyricism of the Irish translation.

In the first example below he uses the expression (gairm na) *teangmhála* (sic) *truallidhe foluithe* to translate Conrad's 'inglorious and obscure struggle'*.*

> He called distinctly in a serious tone befitting this roll-call to unquiet loneliness, to **inglorious** and obscure struggle, or to the more trying endurance of small privationand wearisome duties. (*NN*, p.24)

> Sgairt sé na hainmneacha go soiléir agus dairíribh, mar ba chóir an ghairm a sgairteadh, gairm sin an uaignis chorraigh, gairm na teangmhála **truaillidhe** foluighthe, gairm chun fuilstin a lán mion-anró agus dliostanas beag tuirseamhail. (*MD*, p.21)

> Il appelait distinctement, du ton sérieux qui convenait pour appeler des hommes à une solitude agitée, à une lutte obscure et **sans gloire** ou à l'endurance plus éprouvante des petites privations et des tâches fastidieuses. (*NN*, p.510)

It is evident from the definition below of the adjective *truaillí*, in *FGB* (p.1277), this adjective has a wide semantic range and Mac Grianna is giving us all the breadth of that range, including words such as 'corrupt', 'defiled', 'mean' among others, but most crucially, in its second meaning below, that of 'base' or 'vile'.

> 'truaillí1, a3. 1. Corrupt, contaminated, defiled. 2. **Base, vile.** 3. Mean, miserly. (Var:truailleánta)' (*FBG,* 1977, p.1277)

There is no irony in Conrad here: his use of the phrase 'in a serious tone' belies any attempt at mockery, and the accompanying adjective *obscure* compounds the feeling of quiet despair and desperation that pervades this sentence. Mac Grianna is right to be entirely serious in his choice of translation and to avoid any note of mockery or to try to create an ironic tone. His translation of *teagmháil,* now most commonly meaning *contact* to translate *struggle* is interesting. A search for *struggle* in de Bhaldraithe's *English-Irish Dictionary* (1959, p.717) throws up the following plethora of choices, and does not include *teagmháil*: the definition includes:

> *coimheascar* - (act of) struggling; struggle, melée., *coinghleic* - struggle, contest *coscairt* - overthrow, defeat; struggle *fuirseadh* - fuss, scramble, tussle, struggle, grind *fuirsigh »* Fuss, bustle; tussle, scramble; plod, struggle; rummage, fumble. *gleic* - (act of) wrestling, fighting; struggle, contest. *sníomh* - struggle; strain, wrench. *spairn* - Fight, contention, struggle *srac* - strain, struggle. *sracaireacht* - (act of) straining, struggling. *sraon* - Struggle along *strácáil* - (act of) striving, struggling, dragging along. *strangláil* - (act of) pulling, tugging, striving, struggling *streachail* - strive, struggle. *tromfháscadh* - crush, struggle, strife.

Some of the meanings given in *FGB* for *teagmháil* include *'Bhí ~ bheag againn leis an namhaid,* we had a slight brush with the enemy' and *'Teacht slán as ~,* to survive a battle' (p.1216) which seems to be the shade of meaning which Mac Grianna is employing here.

Dinneen's *Foclóir Gaeilge agus Béarla* gives the following definitions:

> teagmháil, -mhála, f., act of meeting (with, te), coming into contact with, **clashing against; with**, i, falling into the hands of; act of befalling, happening (to, do), occurring (spelled also tagbháil, and pron. teangamháil).
>
> teagmháileach, -lighe, a., contentious, striving; knocking up against (1904, p.725)

This definition perhaps gives a clearer indication of this shade of meaning within the word, especially in the definition of 'clashing against' or 'clashing with'. In fact, a search of all of the texts within *Tobar na Gaedhilge* reveals that this is the most common translation of *teagmháil*. Tellingly the largest use of the word is found in Séamus Ó Grianna's translation of *Captain Blood* (*Caiftín Blood*) with 28 usages and Seosamh Mac Grianna's translation of *Ivanhoe*, with 36 usages, both novels that include extensive description of early military-style conflict, such as battles and jousts, as well as a large helping of swashbuckling and derring-do, and this is the word that both Ó Grianna and Mac Grianna often use to describe this form of 'contact'. These figures are the result of a count made of the word in its nominative form and with the *síneadh fada* on the letter *a*. The majority of instances in the text spell the word as *teangmháil.* There are also a small amount of instances where the genitive form *teangmhála* and a form without *á* (*teangmhail*) are used within the texts. Only one of the texts in *Tobar na Gaeidhlge* carries the standard spelling *teagmháil*[108] once in the nominative case and once in the genitive. In both these instances, the word is used in the same context, that of 'to clash with'[109]. So, it is not just the brothers Ó/Mac Grianna who employ this sense of the word, the other translators of texts on *Tobar na Gaeilge* also use it. This meaning of *teagmháil* is now largely absent from most modern dictionaries, notably the online *English-Irish Dictionary* from Foras na Gaeilge. It seems to be a meaning which has slipped under the net.

In pairing *teangmháil* with *truaillí* in (*gairm na*) *teagmhála truaillidhe* Mac Grianna has hit upon the exact *mots justes*, which also provide alliteration within his repetitive and alliterative riff on the word *gairm.* It seems unlikely that this exact

[108] Seaghan 'Ac Meanman, (1922) *Scéaltaí Goriide Geimhridh*,Dún Dealgáin Preas Dhún Dhealgáin, p.22.
[109] Seaghan 'Ac Meanman, (1940) *Ó Chamhoir go Clapsholas*, Baile Átha Cliath, Oifig Dhíolta an Rialtais.p.12

combination of words would have been used by another writer. His use of *truaillithe* to translate Conrad's 'inglorious' is not only the *mot juste* in this case, but creates alliteration with *teangmháil.* Although *FBG* gives 'base' or 'vile' as a translation for this meaning of *truaillí*, in back translation of those two words *truaillí* is not given by the online *New English-Irish Dictionary*, and is given in de Bhaldraithe's *English-Irish Dictionary* as 'to render something vile – rud a thruailliú'(1959, p.820). Like the above meaning of *teagmháil,* this shade of meaning for *truaillí* may have slipped through the dictionary's net, probably overtaken by its meaning of 'corrupt' or 'polluted', which seems to be its primary meaning in the modern language, with perhaps the ecological meaning of 'polluted' overshadowing even that of 'corrupt'.

Mac Grianna translates Conrad's 'roll-call to…' with *gairm* + *genitive* which also gives him the ability to repeat the word *gairm* throughout this list. This nice touch of alliteraton that Mac Grianna provides is absent from the original. He has also created, by repeating the noun *gairm* to reflect Conrad's repetition of the verbal infinitive using the preposition 'to', the beautiful rhythmic and alliterative repetition within the sentence which appears almost as his hallmark, his creative stamp upon these translations. As well as the aforementioned alliteration, Mac Grianna follows the second repetition of *gairm* with three three-syllable words, (*gairm na*) *teangmhála truallide foluighthe*. The second syllables of the adjectives alliterate, in fact they rhyme, and are repeated, and add to the increasing cadence of the phrase. Conrad interrupts his refrain of 'to…to' in the last phrase by adding 'or to', an option also open to Mac Grianna by inserting *nó*, in exactly the same way as Conrad. Mac Grianna choses to continue the rhythmic pattern, a translation decision that he makes time and again in these works, which stems from his own creative response to Conrad and is influenced by the story-telling rhythms of the traditional culture of *seanchas* in which he was immersed as a child, an oral form that developed in front of a listening audience, and which uses the auditory and rhetorical tricks of alliteration and repetition to capture the listening (rather than reading) audience's attention. Zimmerman, in *The Irish Storyteller* (2001), puts it thus:

> A range of deviance from the common usage was accepted, and…a certain kind of storytelling in Irish could even turn into a display of linguistic virtuosity…There were also what might be called rhetorical tricks to achieve

> effects on the audience: interjections, strong comparisons, and more particularly some forms of repetition or parallelism. (2001, p.490)[110]

Conrad's repetition of the *to* as part of the sequence of phrases depending on the phrase beginning 'this roll-call' is slightly unusual in an English sentence of this nature, where, strictly speaking, the 'to' is unnecessary after the first infinitive and should be omitted in a Ciceronian style of sentence. Conrad's slightly unusual repetition of 'to' may originate in the structure of the Polish language. There is a strong influence on Conrad's narrative style which originates in the syntax of Polish, particularly in his use of triple parallelism. Pulc, (1974) in *The Imprint of Polish on Conrad's Prose*, makes the point that

> ' …English novelists… - Dickens, George Eliot, Hardy, James, Lawrence, Forster and Virginai Woolf – all have distinctive, sometimes idiosyncratic styles. Even so, all of them, including James, can be held to a certain norm from which Conrad significantly departs. (p.125).

Alongside this departure from this 'norm' of English style, Pulc, in making a comparison between Conrad and these English writers and Conrad and a selection of Polish writers, asserts that Conrad's style holds significant similarities to these Polish writers:

> …Conrad's divergence from this basic pattern…involves precisely those elements of style that characterize the Polish passages, taken from such diverse writers as Kraszewski, Orzeszkowa, Sienkiewicz, Prus, Tetmajer, Reymont and Żeromski.'(p.125)

Pulc also states that:

> Some of the rehetorical features of his work may seem to hark back to an earlier English prose – the elaborately arranged and balanced Latinate periods of the seventeenth century…Such cadences were already a part of his heritage, for Polish grammar and syntax are based on Latin and Polish prose has remained considerably more rhetorical than English well into this [the twentieth] century. (p.125)

and also that: 'As for Conrad, you can hardly open a page of description in any of his works without coming upon at least one instance of triple paralellism.' (p.130), giving, among others, an example of a trio of nouns from *The Nigger of the Narcissus* 'Nothing seems left of the whole universe but darkness, clamour, fury,' (quoted in

[110] See also Ó Corráin (1992) for further analysis of these effects in the writings of Séamus Ó Grianna.

Pulc, p.130). This triple parallelism is also a feature of the storytelling tradition in the Irish language[111] and we have seen how Mac Grianna uses this tool in his armoury of rhetorical effects. There are, then, many similarities to be found in the syntax of the Polish that was always at the back of Conrad's consciousness when he was writing, and Mac Grianna's Irish. In this case, Conrad and Mac Grianna may be coming from a very similar linguistic position with regard to prepositional repetition.

In the following example, Mac Grianna translates *inglorious* using the word *claoidhte*, (in modern spelling *cloíte)*.

> — 'We shall see to-morrow!' cried a loud voice, as if to cover with a menacing hint an **inglorious** retreat. (*NN*, p106)
>
> 'Tchífimid amárach!' arsa glór árd, mar bhéadh sé ag iarraidh an teicheadh **claoidhte** a chosaint leis an bhagar. (*MD*, p157)
>
> 'On verra demain!' cria-t-on à voix haute comme pour masquer d'une allusion menaçante un repli **sans gloire**. (*NN,* p601)

The following definition of the word from *FGB* (1977) shows us all the possibities of meaning within the word:

> cloíte1, a3. 1. pp. of cloígh1. 2. Subdued, exhausted. ~ ag an obair, tar éis an lae, exhausted from work, after the day. ~ ag imní, ag brón, worn out with anxiety, with care. ~ ag tinneas, prostrate with sickness. Tá sé ina luí go ~, he is lying very ill. Ball ~, weak, feeble, spot. 3. Enervating. Galar ~, enervating disease. 4. **Abject, base.** Beart ~, base deed. Is ~ an cás é, it is a sorry case. Is ~ an mhaise duit é, it ill becomes you. 5 : cloí1. (p. 249)

As the above definition again demonstrates, as with *truallaithe, cloíte* provides us with a huge semantic range, including 'subdued', 'exhausted',' prostrate', 'abject', 'base'. These last two bring the sense(s) that Mac Grianna seeks to convey in his transation. As previously noted, Conrad's use of the word inglorious in this case, and others, may be tinged with irony: he may be slightly sneering at his own characters. If so, this irony does not seem to concern Mac Grianna: he is more interested in positioning the *mot juste*, and his use of *cloíte* in this instance gives a weight and seriousness to the sentence that Conrad's 'inglorious' perhaps lacks.

It is notable that in both of these examples, the French translation is the literal 'sans gloire', an equivalent open to Mac Grianna in Irish, but which he chooses not to use, again a mark of his creative writer's search for the exact word, for an equivalent

[111] See Ó Corráin (1992) p.97

that most clearly and effectively creates the same semantic range in the reader's mind that the original text does.

Immeasurable.

Mac Grianna's stringent exactness is also evident in the following translations of Conrad's use of the deverbal negative adjective 'immeasurable'. The dictionary definition and synonyms below demonstrate the range of meaning that Conrad could choose from and from which Mac Grianna had to find the key eqivalent in Irish.

> Immeasurable: too large, extensive, or extreme to measure. 'immeasurable suffering'
>
> synonyms: incalculable, inestimable, innumerable, unfathomable, fathomless, indeterminable, measureless, untold; limitless, boundless, unbounded, unlimited, illimitable, infinite, cosmic, endless, never-ending, interminable, inexhaustible, bottomless; vast, immense, great, abundant; informal no end of; literary myriad; rare innumerous, unnumberable 'he dreamed of possessing immeasurable riches' **(***https://www.dictionary.com/browse/immeasurable* 26/09/18)**)**

In the first example of Mac Grianna's translations of 'immeasurable,' we find a case where he does employ *gan* in order to convey negativity, with '*neart gan mheas*' to translate 'immeasurable strength' which indeed is a good literal translation of what is required here from the original;

> But he had never been given a glimpse of **immeasurable** strength and of immoderate wrath, the wrath that passes exhausted but never appeased — the wrath and fury of the passionate sea. (*T*, p.163)

> Níor tugadh spléachadh ariamh dó ar an neart **gan mheas**, nó ar an fheirg an-mheasardha — an fhearg a thuirsighthear ach nach sástar, an fhearg agus an mhire a thig ar an mhuir theinntridhe. (*SB*, p.28)

> Mais la force inquiète des flots, mais leur courroux **impondérable,** le courroux qui passe et retombe et qui n'est jamais apaisé, le courroux et l'emportement passionné de la mer, voilà ce qu'il ne lui avait jamais été donné d'entrevoir. (*T*, p.327)

In the following example, however, Mac Grianna seems to go to the opposite end of the semantic range, as it were, echoing the previous translation of *abysss* with *binn (*'mountain'/'cliff').[112] Here, rather than use a negative prefix or suffix he uses a

[112] See *FBG* (p.108) for complete definition.

positive enlarging or amplifying prefix *sar*-, which is cognate with the English super-, alongside the noun *fairsingeach (fairsinge* in modern spelling):

> A bell was struck aft, another, forward, answered in a deeper tone, and the clamour of ringing metal spread round the ship in a circle of wide vibrations that ebbed away into the **immeasurable** night of an empty sea… (*NN*, p.107)

> Buaileadh cluigín thiar i ndeireadh, agus thug ceann ar toiseach freagra air i nglór a ba doimhne ná sin, agus chuaidh tormán binn an mhiotail amach ina fháinne ón luing, agus thráigh sé anonn fríd **shár-fharsaingeach** oidhche agus mara… (*MD,* p.158)

> Une cloche tinta à l'arrière, une autre à l'avant répondit dans une tonalité plus grave et le vacarme des vibrations métalliques se répandit autour du bateau en un cercle de larges ondes qui décrurent dans **l'incommensurable** nuit d'une mer vide (*NN*, p. 602)

Again, *FGB*'s definition amply demonstrates the semantic range of this word:

> fairsinge. 1. f. (gs. ~). (a) Width, extent; amplitude, spaciousness. ~ a dhéanamh (do rud), to make room (for sth.). ~ a chur le rud, to widen sth. ~ éadaigh, fullness of cloth. ~ críche, breadth of territory. ~ ciorcail, extent of circle. Tabhair ~ slí duit féin, allow yourself freedom of movement. Mar fhairsinge dó féin, to give himself scope. Tá fad is ~ ann, it is long and spacious. (b) Breadth, generality, comprehensiveness. ~ intleachta, dearcaidh, smaointe, breadth of intellect, of vision, of ideas. ~ cumhachta, extent of power. (c) Wide area, open space, expanse. Amuigh ar an bh~, out in the open. Ar fhairsinge na farraige, an tsléibhe, on the open sea, mountain. (d) Plenty, abundance. ~ féir, éisc, maoine, plenty of grass, of fish, of wealth. Tá ~ de gach ní acu, they have plenty of everything. An té nár chleacht an fhairsinge, he who is not used to abundance. Altú do Dhia ar son na ~, thank God for His bounty. (e) Liberality, lavishness. Bean na ~, bounteous woman. A féile agus a ~ do na boicht, her generosity and liberality towards the poor. 2. gsf., npl. & comp. of fairsing. (Var. of 1: ~ ach(as) m, ~acht f) (1977 p.510)

Rather than being 'un-measurable', for Mac Grianna the night is 'exceeding', 'surpassing' excellent; 'ultra spacious', 'supremely comprehensive', and, again unlike Conrad, Mac Grianna includes the sea as well as the night in this image of all-comprehending amplitude. There is an echo here of Mac Grianna's earlier translation of 'abyss' with *binn*, of giving the positive form in Irish that he has extrapolated from Conrad's English negative form.

Impenetrable

In Conrad's next pre-verbal negative adjective under consideration here, 'impenetrable' the dictionary definition is as follows:

> Impenetrable/ /adjective
> impossible to pass through or enter.'a dark, impenetrable forest'
> synonyms: impassable, unpassable, inaccessible, unnavigable, untraversable, pathless, trackless, untrodden; dense, thick, overgrown, jungly, jungle-like; archaic thickset 'a dark, impenetrable forest' •impossible to understand.'her expression was impenetrable'
> synonyms: incomprehensible, impossible to understand, unfathomable, fathomless, inexplicable, unintelligible, unclear, baffling, bewildering, puzzling, perplexing, confusing, abstruse, obscure, opaque, recondite, inscrutable, mysterious, cryptic, Delphic; complex, complicated, difficult, hard; archaic wildering; rare insolvable 'these `statistics can seem impenetrable and tedious'
> •Physics (of matter) incapable of occupying the same space as other matter at the same time. (*https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/thesaurus/impenetrable* 26/09/18)

Again an adjective with a broad semantic range which has a multitude of potential meanings for the translator to exploit. In the following three examples of translating Conrad's adjective 'impenetrable', Mac Grianna comes up with three different renderings of the adjective, each of which gives the most natural, unaffected and therefore most apt and appropriate translation from Irish.

His first translation of *impenetrable* is the adjective *dlúth*, which indeed means 'dense', or 'impenetrable'.

> At night, through the **impenetrable** darkness of earth and heaven, broad sheets of flame waved noiselessly; *(NN*, p.91)

> Bhí bratachaí leathna teineadh ag crothadh 'san oidhche fríd an dorchadas **dlúith** a bhí ar neamh agus ar talamh.(*MD*, p.131)

> La nuit, dans l'impénétrable obscurité de la terre et du ciel, s'animaient sans bruit de larges nappes de feu; (*NN,* p.584)

It is entirely correct in the context of the darkness of the night – the definition below shows that the noun from which the adjective derives refers to the warp of cloth and therefore the adjectival range then expands from this image of weaving into that of something closely woven or thick, and includes that of 'thick fog' as *ceo*

dlúth[113], as well as *mothar dlúth ceo*,[114] a thick bank of fog, which certainly contains an echo of Mac Grianna's *dorchadas dlúth.*

> dlúth1, m. (gs. -úith).Tex: Warp. ~ agus inneach, warp and weft. Tá ~ agus inneach ann, (of cloth) it is well-woven; Fig: it is well-worked, well-reasoned, solid. Tá sé de dhlúth agus d'inneach ann, it is in his very nature, in the very fibre of his being.
>
> dlúth2, a1. 1. Close, compact; dense, solid. Fite go ~, closely woven. Éadach ~, closely-woven cloth. Snáithe ~ (in adhmad), close grain (in timber). Cnámha ~a, well-knit bones. Doire ~, dense grove. Ceo ~, thick fog. Cathanna ~a, close battalions. 2. Close, tight; near. Rudaí a chur go ~ le chéile, to put things close together. Bheith ~ dá, le, chéile, (of persons) to be close together, closely associated, closely related. Bheith ~ do choill, do bhalla, do chontúirt, to be close to a wood, to a wall, to danger. Bearrtha go ~, closely shaved. Pacáilte go ~, tightly packed. Go ~ ina dhiaidh sin, shortly after that. 3. Intense, earnest. (Var:~ach a1).
>
> ceo » ~ bán, dlúth, modartha, white, thick, murky, fog.
>
> do » Dlúth, gaolmhar, do, close, related, to.
>
> figh » Fite go dlúth, closely woven.
>
> garma » ~ an tsnátha, an dlúith, warp beam.
>
> inneach » (Dlúth agus) ~ na beatha, the fabric of life.
>
> mothar » ~ dlúth ceo, dense bank of fog (*https://www.teanglann.ie/en/fgb*)

Mac Grianna has also made this choice to allow alliteration of the phrase, which is not there in Conrad's original. Mac Grianna's translation of the entire phrase *fríd an dorchadas dlúith a bhí ar neamh agus ar talún* has a rhythmic lyrical flow entirely lacking in the original phrase, created by the alliteration of '*dorchadas dluith'* followed by repetition of *ar* in '*ar neamh agus ar talún*.' Irish requires the preposition to be repeated here in order to follow through with any intial mutations such as lenition or eclipsis. These two idiomatic phrases do not need to be lenited after the preposition *ar* (and it is not possible to lenite the initial *n* of *neamh*.) In this case, Mac Grianna could have omitted the second *ar*, but chooses to retain it to give the lilt of repetition.

In the following example, he demonstrates again his ability to find the most natural and most idiomatic way, in Irish, to translate Conrad's adjectival style. In order to translate 'impenetrable silence', Mac Grianna eschews adjectives such as

[113] *FGB*, (p.422).
[114] *Ibid* (p.882).

dlúth and instead opts for an idiomatic phrase to describe *tost* 'nach rabh dul taobh anonn nó anall de'.

> He brooded alone more than ever, in an **impenetrable silence** and with a saddened face. (*NN*, p.86)

> Chaith sé níos mó ama ná rinne ariamh ag meabhrú leis féin, agus aghaidh bhrónach air, agus tost **nach rabh dul taobh anonn nó anall de.** (*MD*, p.124)

> Il restait plus que jamais songeur et solitaire, le visage triste dans le silence **impénétrable**. (*NN*, p.579)

This is rendered literally as something like 'there was no going from one side to another of it', that is to say, it could not be penetrated, or gone through, an idiom which is not included as as a translation for *impenetrable* in the following definitions from de Bhaldraithe's *English-Irish Dictionary*,(1959) and *New English-Irish Dictionary*, online,

> impenetrable, a.Dothreáite; díbhealaigh; nach féidir gabháil tríd. Impenetrable mystery, rún diamhair dothuigthe. impenetrably, adv. Go dothreáite, gan bealach tríd. (1959, p.356)
>
> impenetrable: adjective impossible to pass through - dophollta adj3 cmu dothollta adj3 dothreáite adj3
>
> an impenetrable wall - balla nach féidir dul tríd
>
> impenetrable fog - ceo dlúth, ceo tiubh, brat ceo
>
> impossible to understand - dothuigthe adj3 cmu
>
> an impenetrable mystery - rúndiamhair dhothuigthe
>
> the instructions were full of impenetrable terminology - bí na treoracha lán le téarmaíocht chasta dhothuigthe
>
> I found her dialect utterly impenetrable - níor thuig mé focal amháin féin dá canúint *(https://www.focloir.ie/en/dictionary/ei/impenetrable*)

The following is a definition of *anonn*, in *FGB*, as well as examples from Ó Corráin's *A Concordance of Idiomatic Expressions in the Writings of Séams Ó Grianna,* (1989) demonstrating the idiomatic phrase itself:

> anonn, adv. & prep. & a. 1. Over, to the other side. ~ an pháirc, across, towards the far side of, the field. ~ thar (an) abhainn, over, to the other side of, the river. ~ go Meiriceá, over to America. Gabh ~ chuige, go over to him. Seas ~ uaim, stand over, across, from me. Chuir sé an fharraige ~ de, he crossed the sea. ~ agus anall, to and fro. Dúirt mé ~ agus anall leis é, I said it to his face**. Ná bí ~ ná anall leis an scéal, don't shilly shally over it. Ná bíodh ~ ná anall ann, let there be no two ways about it. Ní luaithe ~ ná anall é, he**

is forever changing course, vacillating. Níl dul taobh ~ de sin, that cannot be gainsaid. 2. Advanced, late. Tá sé ag dul ~ sa lá, sa saol, it is getting late in the day, in life. ~ in aois, advanced in age. ~ faoi Shamhain, on in November. An lá is faide ~ (ná inniu), in time to come. (1977, p.48)

níl gabháil taobh anonn/thall de (agat) *there is no escaping it; it may not be circumvented* nuair a ghníodh sé breitheamhnas ní rabh gabháil taobh anonn de. Chaithfidhe seasamh dó. (1989, p.322)

This is, once again, a natural, unaffected expression in Irish which exactly describes the silence. Mac Grianna brings this expression to the end of the sentence as if to put more emphasis upon it than Conrad has. The greater amount of words here in the translation than in the original makes the end of the sentence a more natural rhythmic choice of position by Mac Grianna, the two phrases which begin with *agus*, giving a rhythm to the phrases and a 'dying fall', a finality, to the final phrase.

This is also the strategy employed in the French translation, even though in this case the literal translation with the word *impénétrable* has been used. Both translators seem to imply that Conrad needs to be improved upon slightly in this sentence, that their translations must expand on his to bring forth fully the weight of the phrase: the French translator translates *he brooded alone more than ever* with the lyrical *it restait plus que jamais songeur et solitaire*. Both French and Irish translators feel the need to include a way of expanding Conrad's 'he brooded' by using expressions of time, in Mac Grianna's case, that 'he spent more time than ever'*(chaith sé níos mó ama ná rinne ariamh)* and 'he remained more than ever' (*il restait plus que jamais)* in the French version. Both translators also have achieved a tighter, better linkage of Conrad's phrases 'in an impenetrable silence' and 'with a saddened face': in Mac Grianna's case with the repetition of ***agus…agus*** to link the phrases, and the French version which makes one phrase from the two in *le visage triste dans le silence impénétrable.*

In the next instance, Mac Grianna does not give an equivalent translation for Conrad's 'impenetrable'. Instead, he adds, or substitutes, another, seemingly random, locative phrase that does not exist in Conrad's original, *Shuigh siad ansin*, ' they sat there'.

They listened, **impenetrable**, broad-backed, with bent shoulders, and in grim silence. (NN, p.88)

> **Shuidh siad annsin,** agus a gcuid slinneán mór crom, ag éisteacht go tostach **toil-dhnústa**. (*NN*, p.127)
>
> Ils écoutaient, **impénétrables**, le dos large, les épaules courbées, en un silence lourd. (*NN,* p.581)

This is Mac Grianna's way of translating 'impenetrable', with its connotations of stolidity, stillness and terseness. Conrad suggests an appearance of statue-like immobility in his description of the sailors as 'impenetrable', which Mac Grianna echoes in his bald descriptive statement. His translation of 'in grim silence' as *go tostach toil-dhnústa*, which might be translated as 'wilfully silent', gives an added sense of threat and purpose to the men's silence which Conrad's 'grim' perhaps lacks**.** It might have been difficult for Mac Grianna to make a direct translation of the English 'they listened', since the apparently direct translation of *d'éist siad* is often used to indicate ' they fell silent', rather than describing an act of listening.[115] However an examination of samples of *éist* in *Tobar na Gaedhlige* indicates that there are many examples of *d'éist*, the simple past tense of *éisteacht* being used directly to translate its equivalent, 'listened'.[116] It could, therefore, be concluded that Mac Grianna dispensed with the direct translation in this instance and chose to expand the meaning by the addition of *shuigh siad*. In his translation of 'grim silence' as *go tostach toil-dhnústa*, Mac Grianna chooses a phrase which incorporates double alliteration in the *t* of *tostach* and *toil*, creating an example of the typical double symetrical synonyms as well as the internal alliteration of *sta* in *to**sta**ch* and *dhú**sta***. The phrase consists of two three-syllable sections (*go tostach* and *toil-dhnústa*) very nearly creates three syllabic alliterations, if we include the closeness of sound in the *g* of *go* which almost alliterates with the *dh* of *dhnústa*.

Unbounded

The Shorter Oxford Dictionary (1983) gives the following definition for 'unbounded' – '…not bounded or limited in extent or amount…Recognizing no limit; passing all bounds; uncontrolled…' (p2403). To translate 'unbounded' in this case, Mac Grianna, using *gan* to indicate the negative, has used *gan teóra* as his

[115] Ailbhe Ó Corráin pers.comm.
[116] See Tobar na Gaedhilge 'éist' and 'd'éist'.

translation, which is indeed a satisfactory and literal translation, reflected in the French use of *sans bordes*.

> **Unbounded** wonder was the intellectual meaning of his eye, while incredulity was seated in his whole countenance. (*T*, p.175)
>
> Agus bhí iongantas **gan teóra** ina shúil, agus bhí dreach do-chreidthe ar a ghnúis. (*SB*, p.50)
>
> Un étonnement sans bornes se lisait dans ses yeux, tandis que son attitude exprimait le doute. (*T*, p.56)

Conrad's next example of the adjective, however, is not so straightforward. The expression that he uses,'our contempt for him is unbounded' is something of a contemporaneous cliché which Mac Grianna does not take under his notice, but instead decribes Conrad's 'unbounded' contempt as 'unspeakable' or 'unutterable', and employs an idiomatic expression from the Irish language to provide this translation:

> Our contempt for him **was unbounded** — and we could not but listen with interest to that consummate artist. (*NN*, p.88)
>
> Ní rabh **innse béil** ar an droch-mheas a bhí againn air — agus ina dhiaidh sin bhí an ealadhain comh sár-mhaith aige agus go mb'éigean dúinn éisteacht leis. (*NN*. P.126)
>
> Notre mépris à son égard était **sans limite** — et nous ne pouvions que prêter l'oreille à cet artiste consommé. (*NN*, p.581)

Ó Corráin, in *A Concordance of Idiomatic Expressions in the Works of Séamus Ó Grianna* (1989) gives the meaning of *níl inse béil air* as 'indescribable' or 'ineffable' (p.207), and *FGB* gives the following expression and its translation: 'Níl léamh ná scríobh ná ~ [inse] béil air, it defies all description'. (1977, p.713), under the headword *insint.* That specific phrase appears frequently in *Tobar na Gaedhilge*, where, in about 100 examples of *innse béil*, about half of these consist of that particular expression. It is not used, however, by Mac Grianna, although it seems to be a favourite of his brother's.[117] Mac Grianna does use *innse béil* a few times in his own writings, (at least, in those that are available on *Tobar na Gaedhlighe.*)[118]

[117] See Tobar na Gaedhilge 'inse béil'
[118] *Ibid*

Another way, then, of translating back *innse béil* here is 'indescribable' or 'inexpressible'. Samples from *Tobar na Gaedhlighe* show him using this expression several times to describe the noun *droch-mheas*.[119] This may be a favoured way of Mac Grianna's for describing the scale, or magnitude, of contempt. It is certainly a more expressive and idiomatic usage than the more literal *gan teora.* The context in which he uses *innse béil* is perhaps more concrete and less purely descriptive than that that where he has translated with *gan teora*: in this instance, Conrad is describing the *Narcissus'* crew's feelings about one of their members, and intensifies the personal nature of this expression of their feelings by using the first person plural narrative voice (*The Nigger of the Narcissus* veers from third to first person narrative throughout).[120] The more particular nature of the crew's unbounded contempt allows Mac Grianna to be more specific and more idomatic in his translation, *innse béil* literally translating into English as something like 'mouth telling'. Again all these factors combine to allow Mac Grianna's employment of the *mot juste*.

> His devotion to Jimmy was **unbounded**. (*NN*, p.90)
>
> **Ní rabh tuirsiú le déanamh** ar an ghradam a bhí do Shéimidh aige. (*MD*, p.129)
>
> Son dévouement envers Jimmy était **sans limite**. (*NN*, p.583)

In the above example Mac Grianna translates 'unbounded devotion' with the phrase '*Ní rabh tuirsiú le déanamh ar an ghradam'*. He has completely transformed this sentence, which could have been given in an entirely literal (but awkward) translation, along the lines of *'bhí an gradam a bhí do Shéimidh gan teora'*, which is how the French translation gives it. Mac Grianna is not happy to settle for this literalism. His translation sees this devotion to Jimmy/Séimidh (the eponymous character of the novel) as 'untiring' or 'no getting tired of', rather than 'unbounded'. This devotion that was never-tiring is actually what Conrad was trying to get at here - his next line reads 'He was forever dodging in the little cabin, ministering to Jimmy's wants, humouring his whims, submitting to his exact peevishness, often laughing

[119] *Ibid*

[120] For discussion of third person narration in *The Nigger of the Narcissus,* see. Henricksen, B. (1988). The Construction of the Narrator in The Nigger of the "Narcissus". *PMLA, 103*(5), pp.783-795.

with him'. (*NN* p.90). Mac Grianna's translation here is more detailed and accurate within the context of the following sentence and the passage as a whole.

Unringing

The adjective 'unringing' might almost be a neologism created by Conrad himself. It is difficult to find a definition of this word in any online dictionary. There is no entry for it in *The Shorter Oxford English Dictionary* (1985) and it is, in a general sense, not a word that is in common usage, except perhaps in the expression 'unringing the bell'. Conrad presumably sees it as the opposite of *ringing,* most likely in the common usage of 'ringing tones', or a 'ringing voice' (as evidenced by the first example here of *unringing voice*).

The French translations of the two examples below are *morne* ('gloomy', 'dismal', 'dreary') and *sourds* ('muffled'). Mac Grianna, following this, uses *gan sprioIladh* and *gan mhacalla.*

> Jimmy looked annoyed and said nothing for a while; then in a lifeless **unringing** voice:- 'Why should I shout? You ain't deaf that I know.'(*NN*, p124)

> Thainig cuma mhí-shásta ar Shéimidh agus d'fhan sé seal ina thost. Annsin labhair sé i nglór mharbh **gan sprioIladh**: 'Cad chuige a leigfinn sgairt asam féin? Ní feasach damh go bhfuil bodhaire ar bith ort?' — (*MD*, p.186)

> Jimmy parut contrarié et ne dit rien de quelque temps; puis d'une voix **morne** et morte: 'Pourquoi devrais-je crier? T'es pas sourd que je sache. (*NN*, p.621)

In each case, both Mac Grianna and the French translator have used a synonym of lifeless for their interpretation of this adjective, the French providing alliteration with *morne et morte*. Mac Grianna provides another of his syllabically balanced phrases with *(i nglor) mharbh gan sprioIladh*, with repetition of the final syllable *–adh* sound, which is repeated in the Ulster pronunciation of *marbh.* FGB gives the following definition of this word:

> sprioIladh, m. (gs. -aidh). Liveliness, spirit; manliness, spunk. Fear a bhfuil ~ ann, a man of mettle. Chuir an deoch ~ ionainn, the drink livened us up. Dá mbeadh ~ ar bith ionat, if you had any spunk in you. Is é an duine gan ~ é, he is such a dead-and-alive person; there is no gumption in him. (*FGB,* 1977, p.1149)

In the first example, neither Mac Grianna nor the French translator have really taken into account the fact that the adjective 'unringing' refers to a sound, and have simply added a synonym for the preceding adjective, 'lifeless'. In the second example, they both use adjectives that refer to sound although the previous example, referring to a voice, might seem to provide a more apt example with which to employ an adjective of sound than this one:

> The blows of the sea seemed to traverse it in an **unringing**, stunning shock, from side to side. (*T*, p.201)

> Bhí buillí na fairrge, dar le duine, ag siubhal fríd **gan mhacalla** ar bith. (*SB*, p.92)

> Les coups de bélier de la mer, **sourds et formidables**, semblaient traverser la chambre des machines de part en part. (*T*, p.104)

There is an expression in common usage in the English language that of a 'ringing blow', which Conrad subverts here with his negative neologism to express the dull thuds of the sea's blows. The French uses '*sourds*', or 'deaf'. Mac Grianna choses again to employ *gan*, this time *gan mhacalla ar bith*, which translates literally as 'without any echo '. Mac Grianna again finds perhaps a more lyrical adjective than Conrad's but helps to give it the hard and uncompromising edge that Conrad has by adding the hard finality of *ar bith* to the end. Mac Grianna does not translate Conrad's adjective 'stunning', preferring to concentrate on the hard soundless nature of the sea's blows.

Voiceless

In order to express Conrad' s pre-verbal negative adjective 'voiceless', Mac Grianna choses another idiomatic expression, two synonyms each preceded by *gan,* very much an idiomatic feature of the Irish language, and which, as we have seen elsewhere, is one to which Mac Grianna gives creative and expansive expression. This is *gan béal, gan teanga,* and we find it given thus in *A Concordance of Idiomatic Expressions in the Works of Séamus Ó Grianna* (Ó Corrain, 1989)

> **bheith gan bhéal gan teanga** *to be unable to communicate* Cuiridh bhur bpáistí 'un na sgoile... go bhfoghluime siad rud beag léighinn is Béarla, sa chruth is nach mbeidh siad gan bhéal gan teangaidh eadar dhá dtír nuair thiocfas ortha imtheacht as na Rosaibh. (p.41)

Mac Grianna expands both in word count and meaning Conrad's usage of the adjective. While Conrad's men lack a voice, Mac Grianna's have neither mouth nor tongue, as well as lacking all the other facilities provided by the semantic range of these two words such as 'speech' or 'language'. Mac Grianna again provides us with an alliterated and rhythmic final phrase in *a dubhairt gur dhona an dóigh a bhí orthú*.

> Men hard to manage, but easy to inspire; **voiceless** men — but men enough to scorn in their hearts the sentimental voices that bewailed the hardness of their fate. (*NN*, p.31)

> Fir a bhí ionntú a bhí deacair a cheannsú, agus a bhí furast a spreagadh; fir **gan bhéal gan teangaidh** — acht fir a bhí fearamhail go leor le droch-mheas a bheith acú ina gcroidhe ar ghlór an té a dubhairt gur dhona an dóigh a bhí orthú. (*MD*, p.33)

> Des hommes difficiles à diriger, mais faciles à inspirer, des hommes **sans voix** — mais suffisamment virils pour mépriser dans leur coeur les voix sentimentales qui se lamentaient sur la dureté de leur destin. (*NN*, p.518)

Unquiet

The following are examples of how (unlike many current translators) Mac Grianna translates the idea/concept by means of a natural Irish equivalent that is appropriate to the specific context, rather by giving a word-for-word translation, which can often produce a translation that is awkward or unnatural. In the example below, Mac Grianna's translation of 'unquiet' is that of *corrach* (in its genitive form of *corraigh*) and *imnidheach* (standard spelling *imníoch*). The following are *FGB*'s translation of each word respectively;

> Corrach (2), a1. 1. Uneven, unsteady; uneasy, unsettled. Talamh ~, uneven ground. Cosán ~, rugged path. Stól ~, shaky stool. Coiscéim chorrach, unsteady step. ~ ar a chosa, unsteady on his feet. Codladh ~, uneasy sleep. Tá sé ag éirí ~, he is getting restless. D'éirigh siad ~ le chéile, they got rough with each other. Intinn chorrach, troubled mind. Saol ~, uneasy life; troubled times. **Súile ~a, shifty eyes**. S.a. maide 1(b).2. Projecting; angular, pointed. (1977 p. 299)

> imníoch, a. (gsm. ~, gsf. & comp. -íche, npl. ~a).1. Anxious, concerned. Bheith ~ faoi rud, to be anxious about sth. Tá sí ~ faoina clann, she is concerned about her children. ~faoina shláinte, solicitous about his health. 2. Eager, diligent, careful. Oibrí ~, diligent, attentive, worker. 3. Lit: Causing apprehension, fearful. Ceann ~ na fleisce, the sore end of the stick. Gabha ~

> ifrinn, the fearful smith of Hades. (Var: imneadhach a1, imníteach a1, imniúil a2) (1977, p.705)

His use of *corrach/-aigh* is entirely the *mot juste* when we look at the semantic range of the word, which includes such adjectives as ‘uneasy’, ‘troubled’ or ‘unsettled’.

> He called distinctly in a serious tone befitting this roll-call to **unquiet loneliness**, to inglorious and obscure struggle, or to the more trying endurance of small privations and wearisome duties. (*NN*, p.24)

> Sgairt sé na hainmneacha go soiléir agus dairíribh, mar ba chóir an ghairm a sgairteadh, gairm sin **an uaignis chorraigh**, gairm na teangmhála truaillidhe foluighthe, gairm chun fuilstin a lán mion-anró agus dliostanas beag tuirseamhail. (*MD*, p.21)

> Il appelait distinc-tement, du ton sérieux qui convenait pour appeler des hommes à **une solitude agitée,** à une lutte obscure et sans gloire ou à l’endurance plus éprouvante des petites privations et des tâches fastidieuses. (*NN,* p.510)

Mac Grianna cannot repeat this usage in the case of Conrad’s ‘unquiet eyes’, as there is a specific idiomatic meaning to the phrase *súil corrach*, which means ‘shifty eye’, which is entirely different from Conrad’s meaning in this case. He therefore is compelled to employ the somewhat more ordinary adjective ‘*imnidheach*.’

> During the slow hours of the afternoon he roamed about on the edge of the forest, or, hiding in the bushes, watched the creek with **unquiet eyes** for some sign of danger. (*AlF*, p.166)

> Ar feadh an tráthnóna bhí sé ag siubhal thart ar bhruach na coilleadh, nó i bhfolach ins na tomannaí, agus **súil imnidheach** ar an chaslaigh aige ag cuartughadh comharthaí na contabhairte. (*DCA*, p.229)

> Dans les heures lentes de l’après-midi il avait erré au hasard sur la lisière de la forêt où, caché dans les buissons, il avait observé le chenal **d’un regard inquiet** en quête d’un signe de danger. (*FA*, p.143)

He omits translating Conrad’s ‘*unquiet* jumble of logs’ – the French translation uses *agités*, following Conrad’s unusual usage with a direct translation:

> As he bent over the fastenings he glanced again carelessly at the **unquiet** jumble of logs (*AlF,* p.92)
>
> Nuair a chrom sé ar an fheistiughadh d'amhairc sé arais ar na maidí ar nós-chuma-liom. (*DA*, p.125)
>
> Comme il se penchait sur les noeuds il jeta de nouveau un regard distrait sur efouillis de bois **agités** (*FA*, p.80)

Mac Grianna chooses not to translate this strange and uncommon usage by Conrad, which seems to indicate the untidiness and unsteadiness of the 'jumble', the pile of logs, containing, as they do, a dead body. There is a hint of anthropomorphology in Conrad's use of the word 'unquiet' to describe the pile of logs, implying that they might burst into life, and in way they do, ironically when a dead body is discovered underneath them. Conrad's usage is so unusual that could be difficult to translate in Irish without it becoming unintelligible to the reader, and perhaps Mac Grianna omitted to translate it for that reason. It does, however, constitute a loss in conveying what Conrad was trying to achieve, a small example, perhaps, of where he fails to achieve an 'equivalent effect.'

The above examples demonstrate Mac Grianna's ability to find appropriate and often lyrical ways of translating Conrad's apparent penchant for negative adjectives. It also reveals times where he chooses to not to translate an adjective. In this light it is interesting to examine his use, in translation, of two adjectives which now have become associated with Mac Grianna himself, and those are *searbh* and *garbh.*

Searbh agus Garbh.

In one of the most famous opening lines in the canon of Irish literature, in his novel *Mo Bhealach Féin* (1940), Mac Grianna apposes the adjectives *searbh* and *garbh* in an attempt to define truth:

> Deir said go bhfuil an fhírinne searbh, ach, creid mise, ní searbh atá sí ach garbh, agus sin an fáth a seachantar í. (1940, p.5)

We are told that it is said that the truth is 'searbh', but he asserts that it is 'garbh' and for that reason it is avoided. Acceptable translations of *searbh* are usually 'bitter' or 'sour' and for *garbh* the most common, although, as we shall see,

by no means the only, translation is ‘rough’. The first half of the quotation is a well-known saying, which can be translated simply as ‘the truth is (does be) bitter’. *FGB* translates it more loosely and more colloquially as follows:

> Prov: Bíonn an fhírinne ~ [*searbh*], nothing stings like the truth. (1977, p.550)

The dictionary avoids a direct translation of the adjective *searbh*, preferring a wider and more expansive interpretation, a translation which in fact explains and enhances the meaning of the plainer and simpler Irish expression (it feels as if the dictionary translation is an attempt to create a corresponding proverb or saying in English). The second half of the opening sentence, where he modifies the meaning of the standard expression to give us a (neatly rhyming) alternative to the accepted wisdom, Mac Grianna changes the meaning of the expression, which is already dark and pessimistic, giving it a stronger and arguably even more pessimistic slant.

Both adjectives are, of course, used by Mac Grianna in all his translations and examples are to be found within his translations of Conrad’s oeuvre. Dictionaries’ definitions provide the full semantic range of the words, and the following translations by Mac Grianna show us that range, giving food for thought with regards to the translation of his renowned opening line.

Searbh

The most common translation of *searbh* is *bitter* or *sour*, within the usual semantic expansion beyond taste experiences to feelings of bitterness or sourness, talking in a bitter or sour tone or facial expressions of bitterness or sourness. Mac Grianna uses this adjective to express these feelings but also to take the adjective to the edge of its semantic range. The selection below from *FGB* online demonstrates the wide vocabulary of ‘bitterness’ that exists in the Irish language:

> searbh1, m. (gs. & npl. seirbh, gpl. ~). 1. Acid. 2 = searbhán.
>
> Searbh 2, a. (gsm. ~, gsf. & comp. seirbhe, npl. ~a).Bitter, sour, acid. 1. Blas ~, bitter taste. Úll ~, sour apple. Leann ~, bitter ale. Tae ~, unsweetened tea. 2. Duine ~, bitter, acrimonious, person. Gáire ~, sardonic laugh. Éirí ~, to become embittered. Bheith ~ le duine, to use harsh words to s.o. Bheith ~ de rud, to be soured by sth. Prov:Bíonn an fhírinne ~, nothing stings like the truth.

Related searches include:

> gnúis-searbh, a. (gsm. ~, gsf. & comp. -eirbhe, npl. ~a). Sour-faced. Bíonn sé lá ~ is lá searbh, he is a moody creature. Blas -~ milis, searbh, sweet, sour, taste. binn » Ól na dí seirbhe a thabhairt ar rud, to face up to an unpleasant situation, to get a disagreeable task over and done with. fírinne » bionn an fhírinne searbh, the truth can be bitter. gáire » ~ magúil, searbh, mocking, sarcastic, laugh. gnáth » Is searbh gach ~, familiarity breeds contempt. milis » Is ~ á ól ach is searbh á íoc é, every sweet hath its sour. soc » ~ searbh, sourpuss.(*https://www.teanglann.ie/en/fgb/searbh*)

The following examples show Mac Grianna creatively expanding the semantic range of *searbh.* He has translated Conrad's 'the complicated and acrid savour of existence' as *'b(h)las searbh na beatha*:'

> Through the perfect wisdom of its grace they are not permitted to meditate at ease upon **the complicated and acrid savour of existence**. (*NN*, p.80)
>
> Le tréan críonnachta ní thugann sí faill daobhtha meabhrú **ar bhlas searbh na beatha.** (*MD*, p113)
>
> Dans l'infinie sagesse de sa grâce il ne leur est point accordé le loisir de méditer sur **l'âpre et complexe saveur de l'existence** (*NN*, p.572)

This is argualbly a much sharper, more compact version than Conrad's original, incorporating alliteration and rhythmic apposition. It has almost an idiomatic feel to it, like a *nath cainte*, as if Mac Grianna were using an established saying or proverb. Once again Mac Grianna is looking for not only a natural way to express Conrad's philosophical pronouncements, but a way which incorporates the beauty and lyricism of the Irish language.

The following example shows Mac Grianna employing two synonymic adjectives together in order to create an intensification of the meaning. Conrad's 'with extreme bitterness' is rendered as '*go searbh nimhneach'*, '*nimhneach*' here also meaning bitter. Its most common translation is that of 'painful' or 'poisonous', and both of those meanings are contained within the words in this context. It is a very potent use of the word and is a powerful, and more forceful translation of Conrad's more pedestrian 'extreme bitterness:'

> and though he had been heard once to mention West Hartlepool, it was **with extreme bitterness**, and only in connection with the extortionate charges of a boarding-house.(*T*, p.170)

> Chualthas uair amháin ag luadh West Hartlepool é, ach má rinne ba **go searbh nimhneach** é, agus badh é an chliú a chuir sé leis go rabh teach lóistín annsin a bhaineadh amach airgead iomarcach**.** (*SB*, p.41)
>
> une fois on l'avait entendu parler de Hartlepool, mais avec une extrême amertume et uniquement à propos des prix exorbitants d'une pension de famille où il avait vécu quelque temps. (*T*, p.335)

In a similar vein to the example above, in the example below Mac Grianna once again employs two synonymic adjectives to intensify the sense of horror that Conrad wishes to create. There is not only the double intensification. He also provides alliteration, very much in the story-telling style;

> There is something **horribly repugnant** in the idea of being drowned under a deck. (*T*, p.210)
>
> Rud **salach searbh** a bheith ag dúil le do bháthadh faoi bhórd. (*SB*, p.108)
>
> il y a quelque chose **d'horriblement répugnant** dans l'idée d'être noyé à fond de cale (*T*, p.379)

There are few modern translators into Irish, I think, who, when faced with Conrad's 'horribly repugnant' would come up with 'salach searbh' as a translation. This is a combination which Mac Grinna repeats (see below). This form of double instensification, with its alliterative and syllabic repetition, gives each of the adjectives the role of intensifier, each adding adverbily to the meaning of the other, giving us dirtily sour and sourly dirty as well as sour dirty.

When he repeats this combination of *salach* and *searbh*, it is in order to translate Conrad's 'a scathing remark or an insulting exclamation'. This further usage of the two words might indicate that, for Mac Grianna at any rate, they form a natural pair: certainly their initial alliteration, their syllabic equality and their close synonymity make them work well in this tradition of paired alliterative synoyms that is such a striking feature of the Irish language. No dictionary entry pairs the two, so this might be regarded as an instance of Mac Grianna's creating a synonymic pair:

> and only roused herself from her apathy to acknowledge by **a scathing remark or an insulting exclamation** the accidental presence of her husband.(*AlF*, p. 27)
>
> Agus ní thigeadh fuinneamh ar bith uirthe ach nuair a deireadh sí rud eighinteacht **searbh nó salach** le n-a fear. (*DCA*, p.39)

> ne sortant de son apathie que pour saluer **d'une remarque acerbe ou d'une apostrophe insultante** la présence fortuite de son mari.(*FA*, p25)

Mac Grianna employs the same two adjectives to translate the much longer and perhaps more cumbersome 'a scathing remark or an insulting exclamation' from Conrad. There is a thread running through these translations of turning cumbersomeness into concision. This might be an example of the quickness and ease of the bi-lingual writer (in this case Mac Grianna) finding compact translation solutions to the more long-winded convolutions of the non-native English speaker (Conrad).

In the following example, Mac Grianna uses *searbh* to translate Conrad's 'ironic' translating 'a mysteriously ironic curl' as *cor searbh ina liobar.*

> She had the unmoved countenance of the deaf, spoke very seldom, and her lips, thin like her father's, astonished one sometimes by a mysteriously **ironic curl**. (*AF,* p.246)
>
> Bhí sí bodhar, agus bhí a gruaidh stodach dá thairbhe. B'annamh a labhradh sí, agus dálta a hathara, chuirfeadh sí iongantas ort corr-uair a thigeadh **cor searbh ina liobar.** (*AF*, p.168)
>
> Elle avait cet air impassible des sourds, parlait très peu, et ses lèvres, minces comme celles de son père, vous étonnaient parfois par **une expression** mystérieusement **ironique.** (*AF,* p.186)

There is an increased level of intensity in his use of *searbh* in this case. Bitterness may often produce in a person a level of ironic observation about the travails of life. In this case, Conrad is referring to a person who is deaf, and perhaps implying that her disability gives her a detached and amused outlook on life. Mac Grianna's translation here conveys a discontentment because of the disability, particularly when using it in the context of '*cor searbh ina liobar'*, which might be translated as 'a bitter twist of her lip'. This phrase ups the ante on the original and may be an overly intense translation, where he actually adds his own interpretation to Conrad's meaning.

In the example below, he uses *searbh* to translate 'unpleasant' to describe a voice:

> **An unpleasant voice** too. (*AlF,* p.5)
>
> **Glór searbh** a bhí ann: ba mhaith a aithne air. (*DCA*,p.5)

La voix était **désagréable** aussi. (*FA,* p.5)

This seems an unusual translation, perhaps indicating an element of interpretation on Mac Grianna's part, within the context of the novel. The French translation simply gives the very directly translated synonym *désagréable*. There are many other adjectives that Mac Grianna could have used here which would have been more direct translations of 'upleasant': as an adjective it is often synonymous with *gránna* even though the most common translation of this word is perceived to be 'ugly', yet the dictionary gives 'an unpleasant woman' to translate *bean ghránna*,[121] which in less enlightened times might have been translated as 'an ugly woman', referring to a woman's appearance rather than her character. It probably this meaning of the word that is reflected in the song *Fuigfidh Mise an Baile Seo* where the line continues *mar tá sé dubh-ghránna*. Mac Grianna does not employ any of these more usual synonyms but opts for one which has a much more specific range of meanings.

In the following example, Mac Grianna uses the common idiom *'an deoch shearbh a ól'*[122], perhaps best translated in English as 'a bitter pill to swallow', which idiomatically translates Conrad's 'she had tasted the whole bitterness of it:'

> **She had tasted the whole bitterness of it** and remembered distinctly that the virtuous Mrs. Vinck's indignation was not so much directed against the young man from the bank as against the innocent cause of that young man's infatuation. (*AIF*, p.27)
>
> **D'ól sí an deoch shearbh** agus bhí cuimhne mhaith aice nár leis an bhuachaill óg as an bhainc a bhí fearg ar Mhrs. Vinck, acht léithe-se nach rabh neart aice air. (*DCA*, p.58)
>
> **Elle en avait goûté toute l'amertume** et elle se rap-pelait distinctement que l'indignation de la vertueuse Mme Vinck n'était pas tant dirigée contre le jeune homme de la banque que contre la cause innocente des assiduités de ce jeune homme. (*FA*, p.38/1128)[123]

The English expression has the feel of an unpalatable medicine which must perforce be taken in order to cure the malady. Its Irish translation '*an deoch shearbh'* however, has rather more the feel of a draught of poison to be taken, with the implication that 'if it does not kill you it will make you stronger'. This sentence has

[121] *https://www.teanglann.ie/en/eid/unpleasant*
[122] See *FGB* definition of *searbh* above
[123] Cut from edition but original text given in notes (p.1128)

been cut from later editions of both the original English and translated French text (although the French translation refers to it in the notes).

In the following example, Mac Grianna has used *searbh* to translate 'malevolently:'

> breathing heavily and **waiting malevolently** for Dain to open the important talk.(*AlF*, p.49)
>
> Bhí a anál árd agus é ag **feitheamh go searbh** le Dain toiseacht. (*DCA*, p.104)
>
> il respirait bruyamment, **attendant avec malveillance** que Dain engageât l'importante conversation. (*FA*, p.67)

There are other adverbs/adjectives that he could have used here that are given in the dictionary such as *droch-chroíoch* or *droch-aigeanta*[124]*.* It could be argued that Mac Grianna is interpreting Conrad's words here rather than giving a direct translation of them.

Garbh

The second adjective in Mac Grianna's famous opening sentence is *garbh* and Ailbhe Ó Corráin has informed me that in Rann na Feirste this word can mean 'violent' or even 'brutal', for instance in reference to a violent drunk person, a person to be avoided at all costs. He would translate the above as '… the truth is not bitter but brutal (i.e. violent) - and that is why it is avoided'. With this in mind I have investigated the full meaning of *garbh* in Mac Grianna's translations. The word is commonly translated as *rough* but as is clear from the following dictionary definition from *Foclóir Gaeilge-Béarla*, it has a much wider semantic range and again Mac Grianna makes full use of that range of meaning in these translations.

> garbh, a1. Rough. 1. Uneven, rugged; coarse in texture. Talamh ~, rough land; uncultivated land. Cosán ~, rough path. Féar ~, coarse grass. Craiceann ~, rough skin. Páipéar ~, rough paper. Éadach ~, coarse cloth. S.a. lus, púdar 2, salann 1. 2. Coarse, gross. Práta ~, large, lumpy, potato. Fear mór ~, big rough- featured man; big bony man. S.a. iasc11, madra12, plána1. 3. **Ungentle, harsh, crude, violent.** Aimsir, gaoth, gharbh, rough weather, wind. Farraige gharbh, rough sea. Glór ~, rough voice. Teanga gharbh, rough tongue, speech. Focal ~, rude, coarse, word. Greann ~, coarse, low, humour. Dóigh gharbh, rough manner. Imirt gharbh, rough play**. Éirí ~, to get rough, to become violent**. Labhairt go ~ le duine, to speak harshly to s.o. D'ionsaigh

[124] See *EID,*(1959) p.432

> siad an bia go ~, they attacked the food voraciously. 4. Unfinished, unpolished, inexact, approximate. Obair gharbh, rough, badly-finished, work. Dréacht ~, rough draft. Cuntas ~, rough count. Tomhas ~, rough measurement. Bean gharbh tí, rough, untidy, housewife. (1977, p.613)

In the examples below, as well as the common translation *rough*, Mac Grianna uses the word to describe voices, rivers in full spate, and crucially, in terms of the meaning of the opening sentence of *Mo Bhealach Féin*, violent behaviour.

The first example cites a translation of what is perceived as the most common meaning of the word in English, that of *rough*. Naturally, there are many examples of this basic usage of the word throughout the translations, such as the following example:

> What meaning can their **rough, inexperienced souls** find in the elegant verbiage of his pages? (*NN,* p.17)
>
> Goidé an chiall atá ag n-a gcuid **anam garbh aineolach** do n-a chuid focal slíocaidhe? (*MD*, p.9)
>
> Quel sens ces **âmes frustes et inexpérimentées** peuvent-elles trouver dans l'élégant verbiage de ses pages? (*NN*, p.502)

In the next set of examples, Mac Grianna uses the word to describe sound of voices and of natural phenomena, often corresponding to words such as 'harsh', 'hoarse' and, in the following example, someone speaking in a growl. These meaning are touched upon in the dictionary definition, but Mac Grianna again shows how fully *garbh* can be translated from English:

> 'Amen!' ar seisean go **garbh** éagcomhthrom agus dhruid sé an leabhar. (*MD*, p.201)
>
> 'Amen!' he said in an unsteady **growl**, and closed the book. (*NN*, p.134)
>
> 'Amen!' dit-il en un **grognement** mal assuré et il referma le livre. (*NN*, p.632)

> and James Wait, silenced forever, lay uncritical and passive under the **hoarse** murmur of despair and hopes (*NN**,*** p.133)
>
> agus bhí Séamus Fóill ina thost go bráthach agus gan bogadh nó beachtú ann, ina luighe faoi mhunamar **gharbh** an dóchais agus an éadóchais. (*MD*, p.200)

et James Wait, rendu muet à jamais, restait étendu passif et résigné sous le rauque murmure du désespoir et des espérances. (*NN*, p.631)

A gust of **hoarse** yelling met him: (*T*, p.192)

Tháinig sgreadach **gharbh** chuige; (*SB*, p.78)

Une bouffée de hurlements **rauques** vint à lui: (*T*, p.358)

'Let her go!' he whispered in a **grating** voice. (*AlF*, p.131)

'Imthigheadh sí!' arsa seisean i nglór **gharbh.** (*DCA*, p.279)

'Qu'elle parte, murmura-t-il d'une voix **grinçante** (*FA*, p.176)

Next, he translates Conrad's *rude eloquence* as *filidheacht gharbh*. *Rude* is here used by Conrad in the slightly older meaning of 'rough' or 'unfinished', closer in meaning to Shakespeare's 'rude mechanicals' in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* than the modern meaning of impolite. Mac Grianna's translation is beautiful and unique to him: as is often the case in his translations, it seems unlikely that another translator would have come up with this translation. It also demonstrates an added dimension to the word *filidheacht* (modern spelling *filíocht*) as being something that should be heard, not just written down or read. This has echoes of the older tradition in Ireland of the *file,* who recited poetry aloud.

he speaking with all the **rude eloquence** of a savage nature giving itself up without restraint to an overmastering passion, (*AlF*, p.44)

Bhí seisean ag cainnt agus bhí **filidheacht gharbh** i n-a chuid focal, agus a nádúir fiadhain ghá leigean féin le neart a ghradaim. (*DCA*, p.93)

60.43: lui s'exprimant avec **la rude éloquence** d'une nature sauvage qui s'abandonne sans retenue à une passion toute-puissante, (*FA*, p.61)

Mac Grianna brings to bear his favourite story-telling features in the following instance, the pair of alliterating synonyms to great rhythmic effect, translating irritated voices as *glórthaí goirgeacha*, and, continuing this pattern with further alliteration with the letter *g*, translating 'in a harsh and resonant uproar'with *go callánach garbh glonndarach*. He matches both the alliteration of the four *g* sounds with corresponding syllabic equality in the two phrases.

> **Irritated voices** were ascending through the skylight and through the fiddle of the stokehold **in a harsh and resonant uproar**, mingled with angry clangs and scrapes of metal, as if men with limbs of iron and throats of bronze had been quarrelling down there. (*T*, p.57)
>
> Bhí **glórthaí goirgeacha** ag teacht aníos fríd an spéir-fhuinneóig agus aníos staighre sheómra an ghuail go callánach **garbh glonndarach** agus le n-a chois sin tormán agus gliogar iarannach, mar bhéadh fir a mbéadh géaga iarainn agus sceadamáin fionn-druinne ag troid le chéile thíos annsin. (*SB*, p.33)
>
> **Des voix irritées** montaient à travers la claire-voie et le caillebotis de la chaufferie; **des clameurs rudes et aigres**, mêlées à des raclements et à des grincements métalliques courroucés, comme si des hommes aux membres de fer et aux gorges de bronze se fussent querellés dans les soutes. (*T*, p.329)

The following example translates 'discordant' as *garbh.* Other instances, such as the previous one, show the many uses to which Mac Grianna puts the word *garbh* in terms of describing noises, such as harsh voices, and gruff speech. He could have used *gleoránach* (*FGB*, 1977, p.645) here, which means 'discordant' or 'noisy'. Instead, he chooses a word with a much greater range of meaning, providing those echoes and undertones throughout his translation:

> When dead before it she made the first distinct attempt to stand up, and we encouraged her with a feeble and **discordant** howl (*NN*, p.78)
>
> Nuair a bhí an ghaoth díreach ina cúl léithe thug sí an chéad iarraidh seasamh díreach, agus thóg muid uaill lag-bhrigheach **gharbh** ag tabhairt uchtaighe daoithe (*MD*, p.110)
>
> Quand il eut le vent droit devant, le navire essaya pour la première fois de se redresser et nous l'encourageâmes d'un hurle-ment faible et **discordant (***NN*, p.579)

The next set of examples translate the word 'violent' as *garbh.* This is perhaps the translation that has the most implications in terms of Mac Grianna's intention in describing the truth as *garbh* in the opening sentence of *Mo Bhealach Féin. FGB*'s definition places this meaning in third rank of importance alongside 'ungentle', which does not attach the level of emphasis and importance to that meaning which Mac Grianna's extensive use here would seem to indicate is required. It may be that *garbh* is much more widely used with this meaning in the Donegal Gaeltacht, or even, more narrowly, in the Rann na Féirste area where Mac Grianna was born and brought up.

> He started off again with a leap, dashed at the fore-rigging, rammed the pin into its hole **violently** (*NN*, p.115)
>
> Thug Donkin léim ar an tseoltrioc tosaigh, agus sháith sé an bacán isteach ‘sa pholl go **garbh.** (*MD*, p.172)
>
> . Il démarra à nouveau d’un bond, s’élança sur les haubans de misaine, enfonça **violemment** le cabillot dans son trou. (*NN*, p.612)

The next instance shows Mac Grianna translating ‘very violent’ with *garbh* alone, choosing not to use an intensifier. This might indicate that *garbh* contains the meaning of great violence, not requiring further intensification. This adds a further level of significance to the adjective, particualarly in light of use of *garbh* in the opening sentence of *Mo Bhealach Féin.*

> He did not look at his chief officer, but said at once, ‘That’s **a very violent man**, that second engineer.’ (*T*, p.167)
>
> Níor amharc sé ar chor ar bith ar an árd-mhacán, ach dubhairt sé sa bhomaite: ‘Sin **fear garbh**, an dara hinneallthóir sin.’ (*SB*, p.36)
>
> C’est **un homme très violent,** ce second mécanicien, dit Mac Whirr sans regarder Jukes. (*T*, p.331)

It might also indicate that when collocated with *fear* there is an implicit intensification of its meaning. As noted above, Prof. Ailbhe Ó Corráin (pers.comm.) suggests that the adjective *garbh* is in common usage to describe a man who is violent, or who becomes violent under the influence of alcohol. In fact, Mac Grianna uses the unadorned adjective *garbh* to translate Conrad’s ‘very violent’, suggesting that the adjective, on its own without any intensification, in Irish indicates a high level of violence. This has interesting implications for an interpretation of the famous first sentence of his novel where he describes the truth as ‘*garbh*’ going on to assert that*’sin an fath go seachantair í’* (*Mo Bhealach Féin,* 1940, p5). Is Mac Grianna suggesting that the truth is very violent like the *fear garbh*? This is a more radical and powerful statement than suggesting that the truth is merely ‘rough’, which is now the most commonly accepted translation in English of *garbh.* His fairly extensive use of the word *garbh* to translate ‘violent’ in the Conrad translations, gives clear evidence that allows an expansion of the usual interpretation of the opening sentence of *Mo Bhealach Féin.* This strand of the word’s semantic range should be taken into consideration when making that interpretation.

Progressive Frequency

Aside from translation at the level of lexis, it is illuminating to examine briefly how Mac Grianna's translations illustrate the differences in verbal aspect in English and Irish. There is a difference between the tense of a verb, and what is termed the 'aspect of a verb'. Aspect refers to the 'internal' tense expressed within a sentence. According to Comrie (1976, p.3) 'aspects are different ways of viewing the internal temporal constituency of a situation'. Ó Corraíin defines it as as term 'used in linguistic theory in order to differentiate more clearly between certain semantic distinctions which in traditional grammar were often subsumed in the overall category of tense.'(1976, p.160). Aspect is also one of the major differences between Polish and English and at times the influence of aspect from his Polish influences Conrad's writing in English. Morszinski (1994) tells us:

> The major difference between the English and Polish verbal systems is in the expression of aspect…whereas English to a large extent expresses temporal semantics periphrastically, the hightly inflected verbal systemof Polish conveys the same concepts and meanings through it morphology. (p.430)

Outside of absolute tenses such as the present, future, and past tenses, there is a further range of tenses, described in grammar as 'perfect', 'imperfect' 'habitual' and 'progressive', among others.[125] It is the 'aspect' within the tense that gives us the difference, in Irish, between the forms *léigh sé* and *bhí sé ag léamh*, along with 'he read' and 'he was reading' in English and in a slightly different form, that of past and imperfect tenses, *il lut* and *il lisait* in French. The former in each case express a past action which has been completed and the latter a past action which is still ongoing.

Irish has two ways of expressing 'be' - the substantive verb *bí* and the copula *is*, and in the case of the progressive tense the substantive verb *bí* is used along with the preposition *ag* and the verbal noun which combine to form the progressive tense in Irish, *bí* + *ag* + verbal noun, thus giving a present tense example of *tá mé ag léamh* – 'I am reading', to give the most common and straightforward English translation. As with Irish, the Spanish language also uses two verbal forms to express 'be': *ser* equating with the copula form in Irish and *estar* with the

[125] See Comrie (1976), p.2.

substantive. Both verbs are locative, ultimately deriving, in both cases, from the Latin verb *stare*, meaning ‘to stand’ (Comrie, 1976, p.104).

As well as this locative basis within the verb *bí*, the locative status and impetus of the progressive tense in Irish is intensified by the employment of a preposition alongside the verbal noun to express progressivity, and this double locativity is no longer present in English which follows the pattern in Irish to some extent, using the verb ‘be’ and the gerund, or present participle, typically the verbal suffix ‘-ing’, which, as with its Irish counterpart, can also have a nominative form deriving from the verb. In theory any verb in English can create a noun, or nominal form by suffixing ‘ing’ and some are common words, for example ‘hearing’, or ‘killing’. Older English retained an ‘a’ before the gerund/present participle/verbal noun in a construction like that of the folk song *Froggy Went a’ Courting,* and which can still be heard in the dialect of the southern United States.

In order to compare the frequency of usage of the progressive tense in *An Máirnéalach Dubh*, Mac Grianna’s Irish language text, to that of Conrad’s original, *The Nigger of the Narcissus*, I counted the number of times the progressive tense occurred in each text. In the original, *The Nigger of the Narcissus*, I used Project Gutenberg’s digitalised text of the novel and checked each word which ended in ‘–ing’. There are 1991 words with this ending, and of those, 937 are gerund/past particples which form the progressive tense. Of the remainder, 444 are adjectives, and the rest, a variety of words for which ‘–ing’ is an integral part, such as ‘sing’ or ‘anything’.

To calculate the frequency of the progressive tense in *An Máirnéalach Dubh*, I used the concordance facility on *Tobar na Gaedhilge* to find all usages of the preposition *ag*, which, as discussed, is an integral part of the formation of the progressive tense in Irish. There are 1319 examples of the preposition within the text: 1083 are used to form the progressive tense, comprising *ag* and the verbal noun. It would appear that there is roughly an increase of 16% in the usage of the progressive tense by Mac Grianna over that by Conrad. This would bear out other

research[126] that the progressive is much more frequently used in Irish than in English. Mac Grianna's usage is consistent with the necessity in Irish to employ the progressive in many cases where the simple present or past tense would occur in English. It is interesting to look at examples where the progressive is used by Mac Grianna when it is not in the source text, and examine how this may affect the overall translation and how it contributes to Mac Grianna's creativity in the translation. Figure 1 demonstrates these figures:

	Ag/'ing' Total	Ag/'ing' Progressive Tense	
The Nigger of the Narcissus	1991	937	
An Máirnéalach Dubh	1319	1083	

Figure 1

These first two examples specify where an adjective by Conrad is translated using the progressive tense by Mac Grianna:

> … and as motionless as if his **expected** visitor had come at last. (*NN*, p.41)
>
> … agus gan bogadh, mar bhéadh an bás **a rabh sé ag dúil leis** i ndiaidh a theacht fá dheireadh.(*MD*, p 50)
>
> …. immobile, comme si la visiteuse **attendue** était enfin venue. (*NN*, p.529)
>
> … as though, like a wanderer returning after many years, he **had expected** to see bewildering changes. (*NN*, p.122**)**
>
> Bhí sé mar **bhéadh sé ag dúil** go mbéadh áthrach ar an tsaoghal, mar bíos ag fear seachráin a philleas i ndiaidh a bheith bliadhanta ar shiubhal. (p 95)
>
> … comme si, tel un voyageur revenant après de nombreuses années, **il s'était attendu** à constater de prodigieux changements. (*NN*, p.627)

It is noteworthy that in the above examples, Mac Grianna translates the same English word 'expected' with the progressive form, despite the English comprising, in

[126] See Ó Corráin, A. (1997) On verbal aspect in Irish with particular reference to the progressive. *In Miscellanea Celtica in Memoriam Heinrich Wagne*r, eds. S. Mac Mathúna and A. Ó Corráin Studia Celtica Upsaliensia, Uppsala, pp.159-173.

the first example, an adjective, and in the second the past participle with the pluperfect tense:

> Wamibo, **after long periods of staring dreaminess**, attempted abortive smiles; (*NN*, p.45)
>
> D'fhiach Wamibo le aoibh a chur air féin, **i ndiaidh a bheith tamall fada ag aisling.** (*MD*, p.54)
>
> Wamibo, **après de longs moments de rêverie vide**, ébaucha des sourires mortnés; (*NN*, p.532)

The sample above shows Mac Grianna translating a nominative phrase 'long periods of staring dreaminess' (also nominative in French '*après de longs moments de rêverie vide*') with the progressive tense. Irish prefers the verbal to the nominative form and Mac Grianna's translation reflects this. Indeed, the higher percentage of progressive forms in Mac Grianna's translation of Conrad, may be reflecting this preference, as well as the preference for expresssing the simple present and past tenses with the progressive tense.

It could be said that Irish does not express perception or knowledge so much with a standard verb form but more often with nouns such as *cuma* or *cosúlacht*, with adjectives such as *cosúil* and with the defective verb structure *dar le*. Mac Grianna uses the structure *dar le* 105 times in *An Máirnéalach Dubh* to translate perception and he often follows it with the progressive tense, after *go* or *gur*. This does not occur in the English source text, nor the French translation, as verbal expressions of perception such as 'seem' are generally followed by an infinitive structure in both languages. In the following examples, the Irish language translation uses *dar le + go* or *gur* followed by the progressive tense to express perception, the French translation uses the imperfect tense, and English uses the simple past. The differences in the three languages in terms of aspect are here clearly illustrated;

> Mr. Baker, who had turned away yawning, **spun round open-mouthed** (*NN*, p.25)
>
> Bhí Mr. Baker **i ndiaidh tionntódh thart agus méanfach a dhéanamh**. Thionntuigh sé ar a sháil agus a bhéal fosgailte. (*MD,* p.22)
>
> M. Baker qui s'était détourné en bâillant vira de bord, **la bouche encore ouverte**. (*NN* p511)

In the example below, Mac Grianna decides to put both clauses in the progressive tense, where Conrad and the French translation have the simple present. Mac Grianna also puts the substantive verb *bí* in each clause in the conditional tense.

the man **who curses the sea while others work.** (*NN*, p.21)

fear **a bhéadh ag eascoine nuair a bhéadh fir eile ag obair.** (*MD*, p.14)

Celui **qui maudit la mer**, **tandis que les autres travaillent** (*NN*, p.506)

In the original and the French translation, the simple past is used (in the second clause *tandis que* meaning 'while', in French, takes the indicative rather than the subjuntive). However this sentence has a subjunctive sense which Mac Grianna demonstrates with his use of the conditional here, which replaces the former subjunctive in Irish. This is a classic example of where the progressive must be employed in Irish whereas English and, in this case, French use a simple, in this case, present tense

In Irish the structure *bí* + *i ndiaidh/tar éis* + verbal noun is used to form what is known as the 'After Perfect'[127] which gives a form of the perfect and pluperfect, often translated into English as 'to have just done' and which exists in Hiberno-English as 'to be after doing'[128]. In the following example, Mac Grianna uses it to express Conrad's pluperfect, which is also the tense used in the French translation. There is an aspectual feeling of the 'After Perfect' in this example, where Mr Baker turns round and turns back again within a short space of time, a few moments or seconds. Mac Grianna separates Conrad's one sentence into two separate sentences, in part because of the VSO syntax of the Irish language, and partly because he decides to repeat the verb *tiontaigh* in the second half of the sentence, translating Conrads 'spun round' with '*Thionntuigh sé ar a sháil*', which literally translates as 'he turned on his heel'.

Although in the next example Mac Grianna uses the pluperfect in the first half of the sentence, he uses the simple past tense for both verbs in the second half. Both the source text and the French translation use the pluperfect. Mac Grianna

[127] See Ó Corráin (2005) and (2007) *passim* and (2013) pp.85-90.
[128] See Comrie (1976) p.106 and Ó Corráin (2005) *passim*.

divides the sentence into two halves, again something which differs from the source and French versions. He places the adverbial time phrase '*ar bhuille an cúig*' at the beginning of the second half of the sentence, something which comes at the end of the sentence in the other two versions. He has to do this because of the precise moment in time that is indicated by '*ar bhuille an cúig*.'

> The carpenter had **driven in the last wedge of the main-hatch battens,** and, throwing down his maul, had wiped his face with great deliberation, just on the stroke of five. (*NN*, p.15)
>
> Bhí saor an ádhmaid **i ndiaidh an ghinn dheireannach a thiomáint i gclící an dromáin**; ar bhuille an cúig chaith sé uaidh a chasúr agus chumail sé a aghaidh go mailltriallach. (*MD*, p6)
>
> Le charpentier **avait enfoncé le dernier des coins fixant les lattes de la grande** écoutille et, jetant sa masse, il s'était essuyé le visage avec une extrême application sur le coup de cinq heures. (*NN*, p.499)

The form '*bí+iar + vn*' which originally formed recent past aspect in Irish but which has been replaced by *i ndiaidh* or *tar eis.* In English and French there are particular forms to express the recent perfect 'to have just done something' in English and *venir de faire quelquechose* in French. The form '*bí+iar + vn*' which originally formed recent past aspect, the 'After Perfect' in Irish has been replaced by *i ndiaidh* or *tar éis.* In English and French there are particular forms to express the recent perfect 'to have just done something' in English and *venir de faire quelquechose* in French, as shown in the examples below:

> 'Cook **had just given me** a pannikin of hot coffee… (*NN*, p.92)
>
> 'Bhí an cócaire **i ndiaidh** muga chaifí the **a thabhairt damh**… (*MD*, p.133)
>
> 'Le cuisinier **venait de me donner** un gobelet de café bouillant (*NN*, p.585)

In his translations of Conrad, Mac Grianna uses the 'After Perfect' even though it is not used in the source text, nor the French translation. In the next example, the source text has the perfect form and the French version has the present tense:

> 'They **have started a row amongst themselves now**,' said Mr. Creighton with disdain, 'better get aft, sir. (*NN*, p.104)
>
> 'Tá siad **i ndiaidh bruighean a thógáil anois eatorra féin**,' arsa Mr. Creighton agus snamh air. 'Is feárr duit a dhul siar-bhórd, a dhuine uasail. (*MD*, p.153)

— Voilà **qu'ils se lancent dans une bagarre entre eux maintenant**, dit M. Creighton méprisant, il vaut mieux gagner l'arrière, capitaine. (*NN*, p.599)

The time adverb 'now' places this sentence in the recent past and it is for that reason that Mac Grianna uses the 'After Perfect', in order to fully express the aspect of the sentence**.** In the next example, it is again the time adverb'now' which gives perfect aspect to Conrad's original sentence, although he uses a simple past tense.

and **now the mate abused me like a pickpocket for forgetting** to dab a lump of grease on them planks. (*NN*, p.134)

— agus **tá an t-oifigeach i ndiaidh bail bhitheamhnaigh a thabhairt orm-sa** as gan práib ghearach a chur ar na cláraí. (*MD*, p.202)

— et maintenant **le second qui m'a injurié comme un voleur** pour avoir oublié d'appliquer un morceau de graisse sur ces espèces de planches. (*NN*, p.633)

… **had an altercation with young Charley** about a pair of socks. (*NN*, p.34)

Bhí sé **i ndiaidh a bheith ag sgannsáil le Séarlas Óg** fá phéire stocaidhe (*MD*, p.37).

…. **avait une altercation avec le jeune Charley** au sujet d'une paire dechaussettes. (*NN*, p.521)

…and with open mouths as though **they had been shouting all together**. (*NN*, p.79)

…agus a mbéal fosgailte mar **bhéadh siad i ndiaidh a bheith ag sgairtigh i gcomhar le chéile.** (*MD*, p.110)

…la bouche ouverte comme **s'ils criaient tous ensemble**. (*NN*, p.571)

In translating Conrad's work (in this case *The Nigger of the Narcissus*), Mac Grianna uses the progressive tense more than ten per cent more than Conrad, indicating that the range of usage of the progressive tense is much broader in Irish than in English. There is a locative aspect to the tense in Irish, in the substantive verb *bí*, as well the preposition *ag* in the tense, which gives another locative form of aspect.

Mac Grianna also uses the progressive with verbs of knowledge and perception, which is not the norm in English (although this form has become more prevalent in the last thirty years, for example, 'I'm lovin' it' is used as a jingle in a Mac

Donald's television advertisement and it has always existed in dialects of English in Celtic countries such as Ireland and Scotland). Mac Grianna translates Conrad's nouns and adjectives of knowledge and perception with the progressive tense, which indicates the depth of the structure in the Irish language.

Conrad's Noun Phrase Modification

Conrad's use of noun phrase modification, the amount and variety of descriptive forms such as adjectives that he uses alongside nouns, is described by Lucas (2000) thus:

> One of the more complex aspects of Conrad's writing style is that of noun phrase modification: the amount, variety and complexity of Conrad's description of a noun or noun phrase...because it is characterised by the noun phrase carrying such a heavy semantic load, [it] is worthy of the name 'nominal style (*Aspects of Conrad's Literary Language*, 2000, p. 199)

He goes on to explain the style in some detail:

> A nominal style is a style in which the noun is typically the nucleus of a noun phrase extended, or augmented, by means of a number of modifiers, some of which may be complex structures containing finite or non-finite verbs. This means that, in this style, verbs are often relegated to being dependent on nouns. The consequence of this is that information is presented in a condensed manner in large units of information: not in short clauses of simple noun phrase plus verb plus complement but as noun phrases containing adjectives, participial and prepositional phrases and relative clauses plus verb plus complement noun phrase perhaps even more complex and semantically heavy than the subject noun phrase. The impression given by this style is that it is prolix and not conducive to fluent reading.(2000, p.199)

Conrad had received criticism from reviewers, right from the publication of his first book *Almayer's Folly,* most notably by an anonymous reviewer who turned out to be HG Wells[129]. This prolixity, according to Lucas, should rather be read as lexical density, showing Conrad compressing large pieces of information into small spaces, and therefore demonstrating a richness of vocabulary which leads more to compactness than verbosity on his part.[130]

Lucas quotes Gaczol's belief that Conrad's high lexical density comes from his multi-lingual background:

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[129] For an account of Wells' relationship with Conrad, see Dryden, L. (2013) "The Difference Between Us": Conrad, Wells, and the English novel *In*: *Studies in the Novel*, Texas, John Hopkins University Press, pp.214-233

[130] Lucas, 2000, p.199.

> In the linguistic subconscious of the non-native speaker, the earlier systems remain subjacent to the language - second or third – actually used, and impose a more fragmented division of the reality perceived, thus leading the speaker to look for, and use, a larger number of words, consistent with that increased vision. (quoted in Lucas, 2000, p.200)

While accepting this as a factor in the formation of his style, Lucas also feels that Conrad's purpose, as stated by him in the preface of *The Nigger of the 'Narcissus'*, is:

> to make his readers hear, feel and see; and his method is to render his images as clear, vivid and precise as possible. To achieve this, he would require a rich vocabulary and he would have to employ it judiciously and with meticulous care. (Lucas, 2000, p.201)

His tri-linguality and non-native acquisition of English is of course of great relevance in the discussion of Mac Grianna's translation, echoing as they do his bi-linguality in Irish and English, with Irish as his first language.

This tendency could cause difficulties for any translation to Irish because of, among other reasons, the differences in word order in the two languages. The English language word order is subject, verb, object (SVO) and Irish verb, subject, object (VSO). Therefore, Conrad's ornamented noun phrases, when comprising the subject of the phrase, will often come at the beginning of the sentence, as in the following example from *Almayer's Folly*:

> In the middle of a shadowless square of moonlight, shining on a smooth and level expanse of young rice-shoots, a little shelter-hut perched on high posts, the pile of brushwood near by and the glowing embers of a fire with a man stretched before it seemed very small and as if lost in the pale green iridescence reflected from the ground. (*AlF,* p.165)

> Bhí sgáthlán beag ina shuidhe ar mhaidí árda i lár balsgóid de sholas gealaighe, agus páirc de gheamhar ríse thart air. Bhí moll brosna comhgarach dó agus teinidh. Bhí fear sínte ag an teinidh. Bhí cuma bheag ortha, mar bhéadh siad caillte ins an tsolas liath-ghlas a bhí ag teacht ar an talamh. (*DCA*, p.227)

> Au milieu d'un carré sans ombre où le clair de lune brillait sur une étendue lisse et plate de jeunes pousses de riz, une petite paillote perchée sur de hauts pilotis, la pile de branchages à coté d'elle et les braises incandescentes d'un feu devant lequel un homme était allongé, semblaient minuscules et comme perdues dans le pâle reflet vert iridescent qui montait du sol. (*FA*, p.142)

Highly ornamented noun phrases, such as Conrad's in the example above, are not the style norm of English, according to Lucas, who argues that the tendency in English is towards predicates that are semantically ornamented, rather than noun clauses. One result of this tendency is the common practice of beginning a sentence with 'it':

> This tendency for a clause to be 'end-weighted'…has also given rise to the clause structure beginning with the cataphorically referential 'it'...But in Conrad's prose we frequently find heavy subject noun phrases followed by brief, semantically light predicates, (2000, p.211)

This characteristic of Conrad's style, that of loading the subject with information, is borne out by the example above, where, in a sentence of 61 words, the noun phrase comprises 45 words from 'In the middle of a shadowless square of moonlight' to 'with a man stretched before it', leaving a predicate of just 16 words. The French translation follows the original almost word for word, perhaps an indication of the influence of the French language, as well as French literature upon Conrad – the two are perhaps an indivisible influence upon him.

Mac Grianna seems to have no choice but to break Conrad's one long sentence of 61 words into four sentences, comprising 54 words in total, each sentence beginning with '*bhí*'. This may in part be due to the fact that he wishes to keep the Irish simple and comprehensible to the readership and he may have felt obliged to simplify such a complex English sentence for the benefit of such readers. Aside from this, however, a word-for-word translation would have been impossible for him to accomplish in this and similar examples of Conrad's nominal style.

Lucas posits that the norm in English is to place the emphasis on the predicate rather than the subject. One outcome that Lucas gives for this tendency to 'end-weighting', is that, a sentence in the usual English style, as he terms it, 'has also given rise to the clause structure beginning with the cataphorically referential 'it'', giving the following example:

> It is possible to examine his handling of any one of his motifs' as opposed to 'To examine his handling of any one of his motifs…is possible'. But in Conrad's prose we frequently find heavy subject noun phrases followed by brief, semantically light predicates. (2000, p.211)

Lucas continues with an example of such a heavily weighted nominal clause from Conrad and demonstrates how it might be broken down, in fact, according to him, would be broken down by a native English writer: he quotes the following example from *Nostromo* (quoted on p.211)

> A long tongue of land, straight as a wall, with the grass-grown ruins of the fort making a sort of rounded green mound, plainly visible from the inner shore, closed its circuit.

He then shows how another, as he terms it 'more typical' writer might deal with this:

> Its circuit was closed by a long tongue of land. This feature was as straight as a wall, and on it was a sort of rounded green mound. This was the grass-grown ruins of the fort, which was plainly visible from the inner shore (2000, p.211)

The difference, perhaps, between Conrad and Lucas's putative 'more typical' writer is perhaps the difference between genius and pedestrianism. Conrad's style may well stem from the influence of Polish and French upon his English, but it is on detailed reading unique, a style unlike any other in the English canon. If it is true that such differences exist in his writing then we can posit that, in his work, we are reading a form of English which is presented through the prism of Polish and French. This, then, is the form of English that Mac Grianna must put into a clear and readable form of Irish, not so complicated that it might confuse, bore or repel the casual reader.

In the example above, from *Dith Chéille Almayer*, Mac Grianna resorts to the 'cataphorically referential 'it'', breaking down Conrad's long, nominally weighted sentence into four sentences, each beginning with 'bhí sé', meaning 'it was'. The question that arises in this case is how much does his apparent 'simplification' of Conrad's more 'complicated' or 'complex' sentence affect the quality of the translation? Is this a case of complex thought being 'dumbed down' by the needs of Mac Grianna's target audience and the differences between the Irish and English languages? In this particular example, Conrad is trying to describe a scene and along with that, to create a mood. That is the reason for his piling-up of descriptive scenes in the first half of the sentence, as well as the crowding together of adjectives to evoke mood, light and shade, adjectives such as 'shadowless' and 'smooth and level' which Mac Grianna omits from the translation. He also omits a translation of the connecting descriptive adjectives such as 'perched' and 'shining on', using the

past tense of the substantive verb, ie, '*bhí*' four times to replace them in his translation. Conrad uses only one verbal form, the simple past tense, that of 'seemed' to connect his complex subject to the simpler predicate.

Mac Grianna's four sentences which begin with 'bhí' do appear to be a bald and simplistic substitute for the original's heavily ornamented sentence. He seems to be boiling Conrad's prose down to its most basic constituent parts, to try to provide the bald facts of Conrad's sentence only, delivering what might be described as a précis of the facts contained within the sentence rather than making any attempt to recreate the source text's atmosphere by the use of lush adjectival ornamentation. This echoes the style recommended by Ua Laoghaire. There is almost an ascetic feel to this translation by Mac Grianna: perhaps at this point (this was his fourth attempt at translating Conrad), a reaction on his part to Conrad's renowned prolixity. This may indicate that he was beginning to suffer from exhaustion brought on by the pace of translation work, as well as becoming disillusioned as to whether there was any useful point to the work. His frustration with translation and with An Gúm's treatment of his own creative work have been well documented.[131] It also points up quite clearly the difficulties that the VSO syntax of Irish is presented with when dealing with the SVO of English and similar languages, really a fundamental basis of Ó Nualláin's and others' considerations down the years.

Caint na nDaoine and 'Gaeilge Bhacach'

When we examine Mac Grianna's four simple sentences in more detail, are they really so entirely without merit for being plain and clear? There is no attempt here to create a visual sense, what has been described as Conrad's impressionistic style.[132] In fact we find that in this paragraph and the following, he begins 11 sentences out of 14 with *bhí*, whereas none of the original's begin with, nor indeed contain, in any part of the sentence, the substantive verb *be*. He pulls Conrad's complicated nominal subjects apart and recreates them as simple sentences which begin with the past tense of the substantive verb *be*.

[131] See Uí Laighléis (2018) Chapter 5 pp.132 - 207 for the most current assessment of Mac Grianna's relationship with An Gúm.
[132]See See Watt, I. (1980) *Conrad in the Nineteenth Century* pp.169 – 179.

Does Mac Grianna begin these sentences with *bhí* to avoid what was then known as *Gaeilge bhacach*? Although this phrase may have referred comprehensively to what was perceived to be ungrammatical Irish, one particular trait in Irish has been singled out for criticism as an example of Irish which is either lazy or unacceptable, or unacceptable because lazy. This is the tendency in Irish, when dealing with a long subject clause, where the verb, which is situated at the beginning of the sentence for syntactic reasons, is then repeated after the noun clause and that clause is replaced with a pronoun**.** Earnán de Blaghad,[133] in a letter to the *Irish Independent* on the third of November 1936, regarding Mac Grianna's translation of Trelawney's *Adventures of a Younger Son* (1831), translated by Mac Grianna as *Imtheachtaí Fear Dheireadh Teaghlaigh* (1936), gives the following example from that translation: 'Chuaigh De Ruyter agus Trelawney, fear acu ins an dhow agus fear acu ins an ghrab, chuaigh siad go Goa.' The repetition of the verb in the second half of the sentence constitutes this '*Gaeilge bhacach'*. This is in fact a clear example of where Mac Grianna has translated a long subject clause without resorting to the breaking up of the sentence into two parts beginning with *bhí,* which is how he deals with the long subject clauses in the section above. The question remains as to whether Mac Grianna chose this path in his translation of Conrad as a result of the general disparagement that existed of this practice, this '*Gaeilge bhacach'*. Perhaps he was stung by criticisms such as that by Blaghad, or perhaps advised by editors at An Gúm to avoid the practice. It is a matter for speculation, although a letter of criticism[134] from one of the readers from An Gúm's committee condemning *Dith Chéille Almayer* as an inadequate translation, indicates that more consideration than usual was given to checking the Irish within the translation than may have been the normal practice. Dónal Mac Grianna's comment[135] on the length of Conrad's sentences may indicate a decision to shorten and therefore, *ipso facto,* to simplify those sentences**.** It is clear from his final recommendation that there had existed the possibility that Mac Grianna might not get paid for the translation because of its extensive so-called inadequacies.

This tendency towards so-called '*Gaeilge bhacach'* also exists in English, perhaps not so frequently but certainly with much less denigration. In the 1951 film of

[133] For biographical information see https://www.ainm.ie/Bio. 22/09/18.
[134] See Uí Laighléis, G. (2018) *Gallan an Ghúim*, p.335
[135] *Ibid*.

The Browning Version, directed by Anthony Asquith, with a screenplay by Terence Rattigan, from his own play, we find a character saying

> This change from the usual procedure is to enable Mr Fletcher, whose imminent departure from this school I know each of you will feel as a personal loss, to enable Mr Fletcher to reach London in time to play cricket for England against Australia. (*The Browning Version,*1951)

This is a use of the construction in speech, and perhaps it would be considered untidy in more formal written composition. Why was it so disparaged in Irish, and is it to avoid using it that Mac Griann 'simplifies' Conrad's sentences? There may be an element of post-colonial angst in this outlook, which compares Irish unfavourably to English and does not allow syntactic difference as an explanation. If it is not allowed in English, or considered to be 'bad grammar', then similar grammatical constructions must be 'bad grammar' in Irish as well. And yet, as the above quotation from *The Browning Version* demonstrates, this construction is indeed acceptable in English, but is perhaps less common, because there is less syntactic need to use it than there is in Irish. I have to admit to a certain bafflement as to why it should be so reviled in Irish at this particular time.

Looking at this sentence as translated by Mac Grianna, it is clear there are losses in this translation. The 'square of moonlight' is no longer 'shadowless' and is no longer 'shining' on the rice shoots, the expanse of rice-shoots is no longer 'smooth and level,' the fire does not have 'glowing embers'. These short sentences cannot seem to hold as much adjectival description as Conrad's longer, subject-heavy sentences do. Their subject phrases contain a large amount of information, which Mac Grianna has to break down into a series of short informative sentences. The French translation, again, is almost word-for-word, perhaps indicating Conrad's affinity with that language as well as the syntactical similarities between the two languages. The SVO syntax of the language can hold the heavy subject phrase almost more naturally than English. It should not be forgotten that this subject-heavy style is not considered 'normal' or conducive to clarity in English writing, and what Conrad is doing is thought of as different, almost revolutionary, part of a style that is unique to him.

Conrad's 'impressionistic', visual style is not being imitated by Mac Grianna here. This sentence, and those that follow, are more like Ernest Hemingway's deliberately simple, reported style than Conrad's more florid complexities. Mac Grianna has no option but to follow the lines of descriptivity rather than prescriptivity, to produce a translation that must follow the syntax of the target language, apparently at the expense of the original. However, this raises two questions: have Mac Grianna's simplifications resulted in a diminished and inadequate translation of Conrad and has this demonstrated that the Irish language is incapable of producing long complex sentences? [136] In the seventeenth century, writers such as Céitinn and Aodh Mac Aingil were producing text which contained long complex sentences. In the Gaelic revival of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, a debate raged as to whether, in a putative Gaelic-speaking country, the Irish that should be adopted would be that of Céitinn or 'caint na ndaoine' as championed by Ua Laoghaire. The debate fell into two camps in a sort of 'either/or' manner which appears to simplify the complexities of Irish and indeed of any language. That a language might contain different registers, and that a written register might differ to that of a spoken one did not seem to be taken into consideration. It is very unusual and unnatural, perhaps somewhat ridiculous, for a person to speak in long paragraphed sentences, but that is how thought is commonly represented in writing. It was felt that to go back to the Irish of Céitinn and Mac Aingil would have been a step comparable to English returning to the language of Shakespeare, a greatly antiquated form of the language, that was no longer easily understood by the population. That, however, was to compare Irish with a highly evolved and developed language such as English, the language of a powerful empire, which had created, through its literature, a clear chronology of its linguistic development. The rapid decline of Irish in the mid-nineteenth century left a gap in its literary development, and it survived primarily as a spoken language and as the language of an often illiterate peasant class. Ua Laoghaire's insistence on *caint na ndaoine* may have helped to create a certain mindset which eschewed any other form of Irish as being impure and 'un-Irish'. With

[136] Long sentences characterised earlier forms of Irish, the following for examples see- Geoffrey Keating *Trí bior-ghaoithe an bháis: The three shafts of death* ed. Robert Atkinson, LL.D. Royal Irish Academy (Dublin: 1890 Aodh Mac Aingil *Scáthán Shacramuinte na hAthridhe* [or *Tractatus de poenitentia et indulgentiis*] (Louvain 1618).

the encouragement of An Gúm, Mac Grianna employs *caint na ndaoine* from his native place, Rann na Feirste in all of his translations and used this with great creative effect, employing the rhythms and rhetoric of the story-telling tradition to circumvent and sometimes illuminate Conrad's linguistic and intellectual complexities. It is a possibility that this, in this instance, is a case of failure to translate adequately. Mac Grianna may not be providing his readers with the equivalent experience that they would enjoy if they read the work in in the original English (and it should not be forgotten that, of course, many of them could do just that.)

Therefore, a further explanation for this apparent simplification by Mac Grianna is the fact that his translations are based on the colloquial, spoken language of his native Rann na Féirste. The translations are fashioned from the *caint na ndaoine* of his native place. Such colloquial speech, in Irish as in English, prefers clarity and brevity to prolixity and complexity. The crux of the matter is that the spoken register is being used to replace a written one, which remains underdeveloped and overlooked. These translations are fully accessible to the understanding of native speakers of Irish, particularly of Ulster Irish. That in itself does not necessarily make them adequate as translations. Conrad's complex language is not easily accessible to the native English-speaking reader and therefore might cause some sort of linguistic shortfall on Mac Grianna's part or on the part of the Irish language itself. Perhaps this explains the letter of complaint that An Gúm received from one of its committee with regard to Mac Grianna's translation of *Almayer's Folly*[137]. It may also explain Blaghad's complaint about Mac Grianna's translation of *Imeachtaí Fear Dheireadh Teaghlaigh* and his mention of what he terms 'abairtí bhacacha'. Within all this we have the kind of reverse-colonial attitude propounded by Ua Laoghaire and his supporters, that of the 'classical purity' of Irish which must be protected from the 'corruption' of the English language, and by extension, from the 'corruption' of the thought that might be expressed in Engish. This factors come together in a perfect storm, as it were, to provide us with the type of translation that Mac Grianna provides, factors which may well extend to all of the translations produced by Scéim Aistrriúcháin an Ghúim. The question remains, is

[137] See National Archives GAEL/AN GUM/ A0106.

that form of Irish, *caint na ndaoine*, the spoken register of Irish, enough when it comes to a translation of a major writer like Conrad?

These claims are not made to malign Mac Grianna, or to disparage his translation, nor indeed to pour scorn on a highly developed linguistic concept such as *caint na ndaoine.* The concern is that these are translations of works by a major writer in the canon of English literature. As demonstrated, the linguistic background to Conrad's production of such works is complex and multi-lingual. He writes in a multifaceted intricate style which gives pause to all his critics. Within the style itself are complexities, perhaps not as obviously marked as those of Joyce, for example, but they are there and should not be ignored. It is unlikely that a translation of *Ulysses* by James Joyce in a *caint na ndaoine* style would be considered an acceptable translation. A brief survey of the French translations on *Tobar na Gaeilge* by André Gide and others indicates that, in the vast majority of cases, these translations are extremely direct, almost word-for-word. We can make the assumption of equivalence, that the reader in the target language, in this case French, is receiving a very similar experience when reading the works as the reader in the original language. This cannot be said for readers in Irish. Does this then mean that Mac Grianna 'failed' in his attempt to translate Conrad?

It is not the first time this question has been raised. Concerns around the quality of Mac Grianna's tanslations were being brought up at the time they were written: a file from An Gúm,[138] held in Cartlann Naisiúnta na hÉireann contains a letter from one of its reader's unhappy with the quality of Mac Grianna's translation of *Almayer's Folly*, Mac Grianna's response to this letter and Dónal Mac Grianna's response to the situation. Within a period of a few days, from 26 until 30 August 1930, a brief flurry of correspondence between an anonymous reader for An Gúm's, Seosamh Mac Grianna and his editor Dónal Mac Grianna reveals a complaint from the reader with regard to the adequacy or otherwise of Mac Grianna's translation of *Almayer's Folly* (*Díth Chéille Almayer*), followed by a letter of protest in response to this from Seosamh Mac Grianna, and a report from Dónal Mac Grianna on the resolution of the conflict. The unnamed reader, although beginning with a sort of disclaimer 'go bhfuil cuma ar an aistritheoir go bhfuil togha na Gaeidhlge aige'

[138] *Ibid*.

however continues ‘ach má tá féin, tá cuma air go bhfuil se neamh-chúramach agus failligheach’, and for this reason, with regard to the translator, is certain ‘nach dtugann sé cothrom na Féinne dó féin’. Is it not clear from the letter whether Mac Grianna’s identity is known to the reader, but it seems more likely that it is not. This reader claims that he or she has made a detailed examination of Chapters 1- 4 of *Díth Chéille Almayer* and found them wanting. That he has rushed his worked and neither re-read nor corrected it are some of the accusations levelled at Mac Grianna by this reader, but the most serious concern is as follows:

> Ach sé an locht is mó atá agam ar an aistriú ná go bhfuil cuid mhór píosaí beaga as an bhun-leabhar fágtha ar lár ar fad: agus fós go bhfuil cuid de na abairteacha béarla [sic] corrbhuighthe chomh mór san gur ar éigin atá an smaointeamh atá sa Bhéarla bhunaidh ar fagháil in aon chor san aistriúcháin …Mar sin, níl an t-aistriú sách-chruinn …ní fhéadfaí é d’fhoillsiú mar aistriú díleas fíreannach ar ‘Almayer’s Folly’ [sic], ós rud é go bhfuil a lán píosaí beaga fágtha ar lár ann.(National Archives GAEL/AN GUM/A0106)

This expresses exactly the same concerns that have disquieted commentators on translation from earliest times and which still concern them today. A letter of 21 August from Rúnaí Choiste na Leabhar asking Mac Grianna to forward them the edition of *Almayer’s Folly* that he used when making his translation ‘mar do réir deallraimh tá difríocht éigin idir an t-eagrán a bhí agat-sa, agus an t-eagrán (The Uniform Edition: Dents) atá annso againn’.(ibid). It might be inferred from this that Mac Grianna has left out material that is contained in the above-mentioned edition of *Almayer’s Folly.* Differing versions of the novel exist, for example some text is missing from a 1947 copy [139] when compared to the text used by *Tobar na Gaedhilge.*[140] However, putting the reader’s concerns along with this letter, it may be reasonably inferred that Mac Grianna has omitted perhaps substantial amounts of text.

Mac Grianna’s response to this is to write a letter of protest which he asks to have put before Coiste na Leabhar. Mac Grianna insists that eighty per cent of the reader’s corrections were wrong. The tone of Mac Grianna’s letter is at once aggressive and defensive, as well as bordering on the hysterical, eg ‘He accused me of carelessness, I have smashed his charge to pieces with actual facts.’ (National Archives/ GAEL/AN GUM/A00106). Dónal Mac Grianna’s final assessment of the

[139] Conrad, J. (1895, this edition 1947) *Almayer’s Folly,* Collected Edition, London, Dents.
[140] Online edition, David Price via Project Gutenburg

translation suggests that there existed the possibility that Mac Grianna would not be paid for his work if deemed unsatisfactory.

> To the charge of leaving out large pieces of text, Mac Grianna has this to say:
>
> I am willing to give a conscientious explanation of any omission of this kind in the whole translation. I should like to draw your attention to the fact that I know Conrad better than most men by now. I have a complete set of his works. (*ibid*)

He goes on to list the books by Conrad that he has read, sixteen in all. He continues:

> I have read reviews of Conrad. I have even given a lecture on Conrad[141], and studied his biography. Now, if any man on the Committee, or the whole Committee combined, can equal my knowledge of Conrad, I am willing to admit them to equal terms with me in a discussion as to how Conrad should be translated (*ibid*)

It is clear from the letter, despite its blustering and bombastic tone, that Mac Grianna admired Conrad and felt competent to translate him well. Dónal Mac Grianna's more measured assessment of the situation provides a more pragmatic approach to translating Conrad into Irish. Dónal sits down with Seosamh for the best part of a few days and thrashes out the problem of omissions within the translation - 'Chaith mé féin agus an t-aistritheoir tamall maith de dhá lá ag gabháil fríd an láimhscríbhinn arís féachaint cad a b'fhéarr a dhéanamh leis an [sic] pointí a bhí in amhras' (*ibid*) His observations are that, according to '*an t-aistritheoir'* [Mac Grianna]: 'Bhí rudaí áirithe, ámh, agus cheap sé, siocair cuid abairteacha Chonrad a bheith comh fada liobasta agus bhí siad, nach raibh gádh le n-a n-atharú ná le n-a gceartú'(*ibid*). His report ends with a recommendation which perhaps dispels Seosamh's worst fear: 'Im thuarimse is féidir glacadh leis an láimh-scríbhinn anois; agus ní fheicim rud ar bith i gcoinne iomlán airgead an leabhair seo d'íoc leis an aistritheoir' (*ibid*)

It would seem from this correspondence, and, in particular, from the comment on Conrad's sentences as being '*fada*' (long) and, more tellingly, '*liobasta*' (ungainly or clumsy), that according to Mac Grianna, the fault lies with Conrad, and that he writes clumsily, with long meandering sentences. It is significant that *Almayer's Folly,* Conrad's first novel causes these difficulties, a novel whose awkwardnesses in

[141] I cannot find any evidence of such a lecture given by Mac Grianna.

grammar and infelicities of style have been noted by Conrad's reviewers.[142] This correspondence is also valuable because it does confirm Mac Grianna's admiration for Conrad as a writer, and secondly, that he did experience difficulties in translating Conrad's work, difficulties directly related to the shape and size of Conrad's sentences.

To return to the reader's most serious concern 'go bhfuil cuid de na abairteacha béarla [sic] corrbhuighthe chomh mór san gur ar éigin atá an smaointeamh atá sa Bhéarla bhunaidh ar fagháil in aon chor san aistriúcháin': in the reader's opinion, some of the original English sentences have been cut so much that the original thought has barely been translated, lost from the translation rather than lost in translation. It would perhaps be invidious to state categorically that the actual thought behind the sentence has been lost by Mac Grianna, but his omissions do simplify and curtail those '*abairtí fada liobasta'*. These simplifications and shortenings demonstrate the problems that arise for the translator of Irish with Conrad's long, adnominal subjects and this is ultimately the reason for any apparent shortening or simplifying of Conrad's style. Other than using the (at the time) much-derided 'Gaeilge bhacach', (as designated by Blaghd), the creation of shorter sentences and employing *bhí* at their beginning may be Mac Grianna's only alternative.

The ultimate test is that of whether such omissions seriously impair the quality of the translation. Is it the case that, as An Gúm's reader opines, that the basic thought behind the sentence is being omitted, that Mac Grianna's evasions are an omission too far? None other than an tAthair Gearóid Ó Nualláin, in his eighteen principles of translation[143] from English to Irish recognised the inevitability and, in fact, the necessity for omissions in translating from Irish to English. In Principle 6 he states that Irish will omit the English, and indeed in a further principle (7), he states that Irish must insert English where none exists. This also recalls Savory's points on translation in general.[144] So this pattern of translation 'loss and gain' seems to be an inevitability and a universal principal – providing the reason why the expression 'lost

[142] See Watt, I. (1980) *Conrad in the Nineteenth Century*, London, Chatto and Windus pp.55-67.
[142] See Chapter 2.
[142] See Chapter 2.

in translation' exists in the English language. However, in this case it would appear that the peculiarities of Conrad's style of sentence have tripped Mac Grianna up somewhat. There is a sort of 'perfect storm' brewing, bringing together a unique concatenation of circumstances, including Mac Grianna's personal circumstances – his state of mind, his exhaustion, his pressing need for money, his dislike of translating, which he regarded as hack work, along with time pressure and deadlines from An Gúm. Along with these personal problems, he faced prevailing beliefs regarding 'caint na ndaoine', the importance of defending the 'purity' of the Irish language from encroaching *Béarlachas*, and an implicit, unwritten directive that the syntax of Irish should always remain simple, and uncomplicated by long sentences filled with snaking subordinate clauses. Mac Grianna is capable of taking the *caint na ndaoine* of his *áit dhúchais*, Rann na Feirste in Donegal and making intense poetic prose from it, as is evident from, for example, the much-admired opening pages of his novel *An Druma Mór*. *Dith Chéille Almayer* may be the one translation of Conrad's where Mac Grianna, in some places, falls short of the standard that he set in the other works.

In 1937, Liam Ó Rinn[145]published *Peann agus Pár*, an influential volume on style in written Irish and recommendations for the writing of Irish. Chapter headings include one on '*Stíl*' (p. 85) and one on *'Aistriúcháin'* (p.136). At the end of this chapter he makes a series of recommendations for the would-be translator, some of which reflect the difficulties already noted by Ó Nualláin, roughly twenty years earlier, and which seem to have been encountered by Mac Grianna in his translating career for An Gúm, and in particular, perhaps, in the translation of *Almayer's Folly*. These recommendations include such suggestions as translating with a partner ('Is fearr beirt ná éinne amháin i mbun obair aistriúcháin' (1937, p.148)) and that the spirit rather than the letter of the translation was the true aim of the translator ('Tabhair aire don litir ach tabhair a sheacht n-oiread aire don spiorad.' (1937, p.146)). One (no. 2) discusses a phenomenon he terms 'Jungle English', which I assume refers to writers who repeat themselves or write in a sort of circular style ('Tá rud ann ar a dtugtar 'Jungle English'. An té a bhfuil sé aige is féidir leis, i gan [sic] fhios dó féin, rud do rá fé dhó, fé thrí, fé cheathair. Tarraingean sé malairt focal chuige gach uair adeir sé é. Ná haistrigh é ach aon uair amháin' (1937, p.146)).

[145] For biographical details on Liam Ó Rinn, see https://www.ainm.ie/Bio (26/09/18).

One key recommendation he makes is that of avoiding what he terms '*an abairt bhacach'*, exactly the sort of sentence which so incensed Blaghad. In the same recommendation he advises against writing a series of sentences beginning with the same verb, giving '*bhí – bhí – bhí –* ' as an example. Here is Ó Rinn's recommendation in full:

> An locht úd ar a dtugtar an abairt bhacach ('Bhí Seáinín…bhí sé…) agus an locht eile úd, sreath d'abairtí do thosnú leis an aon bhriathar amháin 'bhí – bhí – bhí -') is deacair iad do sheacaint uaireanta in obair aistriúcháin. Bíonn an briathar fé cheilt nach mór san abairt Béarla, ní ina fíor-thosach ach in áit éigin laistigh di, ar chor nach miste don údar é chur i leathdhosaon abairt as diaidh a chéile, ach má dhéanairse, aistriú lomdíreach orthu is i bhfíor-thosach a bheid [sic] agat. Ar do bhás seachain é sin, bíodh is go mbeidh ort an abairt d'ionramháil i slí go bhféadfair an briathar do ligean ar lár ar fad.(1937, p.147)

Attitudes towards the so-called '*abairt bhacach'* had changed by 1957 and we find Seán Mac Maoláin writing in *Lorg an Bhéarla*, in almost a conciliatory way:

> Le Gaeilge shothuigthe a chur ar abairtí Béarla den chineál úd, bhaineadh cuid de na cainteoirí dúchais feidhm as leaganacha den sórt seo: '**Dúirt** an fear a tháinig isteach agus gunna leis, **dúirt** sé le muintir an tí gurbh airgead a bhí uaidh.
>
> Fuarthas tormas trom ar an chineál sin abairte, agus tugadh 'an abairt bhacach' mar leasainm air. Ach ní raibh an bhacaí an-mhór, ar chor ar bith. Níl de locht ar an abairt seo thuas ach an príomhbhriathar a bheith inti in dhá áit. Murab é sin, bheadh sí ina habairt maith go leor.i. 'an fear a tháinig isteach agus gunna leis, dúirt sé le muintir an tí gurbh airgead a bhí uaidh.' Agus is deimhin gur shothuigthe go mór í ná 'dúirt an fear a tháinig isteach agus gunna leis le muintir an tí gurbh airgead a bhí uaidh.' Bheadh sí saor ón bhacaí a bhaineann le '... a tháinig isteach agus gunna leis le muintir an tí...(1957, p.8)

Mac Maolain almost welcomes this '*abairt bhacach'*, as providing clarity in what might otherwise be a very awkwardly-worded sentence. However, the '*tormas trom'* is still very much in the air in the nineteen thirties when Mac Grianna and Ó Rinn are writing. The origins of this opprobrium are difficult to trace. Mac Maoláin himself was accused of it in his translation of *The Power of the Dog* by Donn Byrne (*Neart na Cú-Nimhe*) with the following comments from *The Leader*, 28 Meán Fomhair, 1940:

> At the same time we must say that the broken-back sentence features far too often in *Neart na Cú-Nimhe* and that public money should not have been expended on printing the book in its present form. No condemnation can be too strong for the laxity or cowardice of the Gum (sic) editors who passed the two books mentioned with the blemish of the abairt bhríste spattered over them like a measles rash – we cannot believe that any of the Gum editors is so lacking in literary feeling and taste as not to appreciate that it is inadmissible to write a sentence like this: 'Dubhairt sé nár thairbhighe do Shasaain priosúnaight a dhéanamh de roinn iomlán de arm na Frainnce, nár thairbhighe sin ná prisoúnach a dhéanamh de Napoleon féin'. All that is needed in that case to put the sentence right is simply to omit the unnecessary phrase. In other instances it may be necessary to re-cast the sentence in order to get rid of the stammer and secure shapeliness and clarity. (quoted in Uí Laighléis, 2003, p145)

The ferocity of this criticism illuminates the public demands that the translators and the editors of An Gúm's translation scheme had to deal with, and how these criticisms might affect the quality of the translations that were made. Where this almost vicious excoriation of a harmless stylistic feature originates is possibly lost to time. One illuminating recommendation that Ó Rinn makes is the following:

> Bí ag cleachtadh an aistriúcháin go minic…Níorbh olc an tseift chun cleachta Béarla uasal do chuir i gnáth-Ghaeilge shimplí nó Béarla comhráiteach do thiontú i nGaeilge mhaorga Chéitinnúil. (p.148)

This is an unusual recommendation for translators from English to Irish as it actually suggests translating a simple piece of English into '*G(h)aeilge mhaorga Chéitinnúil'* (which might be translated as 'the elegant Irish of Keating', or 'Stately, Keating-like Irish'). This is unusual, as most recommendations for Irish translation at the time would have sanctioned the opposite – to keep the Irish as simple, especially syntactically, as possible, to break a long sentence down into three or four shorter sentences, and so on.[146] Ó Rinn is only suggesting that translators do this for practice, to flex their translating muscles, as it were, but it is still unusual to find any suggestion at all for adopting Céitinn's style, in Irish generally and in translation from English into Irish in particular. Ua Laoghaire disliked Céitinn's Irish, saying the following in regard to him:

> How I detest Keating's big words! I tell you, with all due respect to him, Keating is a fraud. His Irish is not true Irish. It was not the living Irish of his time. A single particle of the true raciness of the language is not to be found in him. (*Irisleabhar Mhá Nuad* 1991, p.117)

[146] See, as an example of this, An Gúm's Treoracha d'Aistritheoirí.

And with regard to Céitinn's language versus that of *caint na ndaoine*:

> For a living language, the books and the speech of the people should go hand in hand. What is printed in the books should be an exact representation of what comes out of the people's mouths. (*Papers on Irish Idiom,* 1922, p.86)

This is a most limiting view of a language. Speech is not writing, and all writers, of whatever genre, should be allowed to express themselves within an acceptable register of the genre, or in creative writing, in any register and in any genre that takes their fancy. Ua Laoghaire is advocating a very loose and informal style if it is one that based on speech alone: 'The true raciness', as he terms it, of Irish, is unlikely to be a suitable format for Céitinn, in *Trí Bíorghaithe an Bháis*, for example, where he is writing a religious tract, He is using a literary style that was customary for his time, a written standard, which had been developed by the literary class. In this sense it is, if not *caint na ndaoine*, as such, it is certainly an acceptable and developed form of the language.

He is certainly damned with faint praise by Bergin in the introduction to *Tri Biorghaithe an Bháis*. Céitinn's style is however, surprisingly easy to read, and his use, or over-use, as he has been accused of, of alliteration gives his writing a lilt and rhythm which is lyrical and refreshing. Ó Laoghaire seems to feel that Céitinn's writing strayed too far from the Irish that was spoken in the mid-nineteenth century. Again it should be pointed out that written and spoken registers are different. Peadar Ua Laoghaire was no doubt a charismatic individual and *Séadhna* was such a ground-breaking publication in its time that his acolytes appear to have become willing to abandon all other forms and dialects of Irish and adopt his, (Gearóid Ó Nualláin is a prime example of this phenomenon), in preference to all other forms of the language. But *Séadhna* is a version of a folktale and a simple, seemingly spoken style, that of a *scéalaí* or storyteller, is indeeed suitable for this genre of writing, it is the correct register in which to couch such an apparently simple and generic tale.

This influence was still reverberating around translation matters when Mac Grianna was translating Conrad. Conrad's style might be closer to that of Céitinn than that of Ó Laoghaire, but by the time of translating *Almayer's Folly* Mac Grianna was most definitely using a *caint na ndaoine* style. Dónal Mac Grianna's comments on the length of Conrad's sentences indicate this perennial problem that the emphasis on simplicity in Irish posed for translators. Seosamh Mac Grianna, perhaps in collaboration with Dónal Mac Grianna, does provide us with a series of

simple sentences beginning with '*bhí*', something which Ó Rinn expressly disagrees with, something which, according to him, would constitute 'bad Irish', or at least certainly a 'bad translation'. If Mac Grianna does this to avoid, in some part, the *abairt bhacach*, it would seem that he jumps from the frying pan of the *abairt bhacach* into the fire of beginning a series of sentences with *bhí*, Liam Ó Rinn's other translation 'no-no'. It seems the translators with An Gúm's translation scheme cannot win.

It is not a simple fact that a series of sentences beginning with *bhí* of necessity constitutes 'bad translation'. The original may contain a series of sentences which begin with 'It is', or something equally simple (the translator of Ernest Hemingway, for example, might easily encounter such a phenomenon in his writing). In translating this particular piece of Conrad's work, however, Mac Grianna has most emphatically not come upon such a phenomenon. Mac Grianna reduces a series of heavy, ornate pronomial clauses from Conrad to these short simple sentences. There is almost an echo here of Ua Laoghaire and Céitinn, with Mac Grianna taking Ó Laoghaire's part and Conrad taking Céitinn's. In looking at the background to the reader's complaint about Mac Grianna's translation, it is clear that the length and 'clumsiness' of Conrad's sentences do indeed give Mac Grianna problems. But these so-called 'long' and 'clumsy' sentences are the hall-mark of Conrad's so-called impressinaistic style, conveying a long series of connected images at the beginning of the sentence to create atmosphere and mood. Mac Grianna does not attempt this. His sentences are a bald, prosaic itemisation of the bare facts of the sentence, often omitting descriptive adjectives and other atmosphere-inducing stylistic devices of Conrad's. He makes no attempt to give some sort of alternative and uniquely Irish sense which compensates for differences within the two languages, as we have seen him do in Conrad's other works.

> In the middle of a shadowless square of moonlight, shining on a smooth and level expanse of young rice-shoots, a little shelter-hut perched on high posts, the pile of brushwood near by and the glowing embers of a fire with a man stretched before it seemed very small and as if lost in the pale green iridescence reflected from the ground. (*AIF,* p.165)
>
> Bhí sgáthlán beag ina shuidhe ar mhaidí árda i lár balsgóid de sholas gealaighe, agus páirc de gheamhar ríse thart air. Bhí moll brosna comhgarach dó agus teinidh. Bhí fear sínte ag an teinidh. Bhí cuma bheag

> ortha, mar bhéadh siad caillte ins an tsolas liath-ghlas a bhí ag teacht ar an talamh. (*DCA*, p.227)
>
> Au milieu d'un carré sans ombre où le clair de lune brillait sur une étendue lisse et plate de jeunes pousses de riz, une petite paillote perchée sur de hauts pilotis, la pile de branchages à coté ed'elle et les braises incandescentes d'un feu devant lequel un homme était allongé, semblaient minuscules et comme perdues dans le pâle reflet vert iridescent qui montait du sol. (*FA,* p.142)

This is the first sentence of a series of sentences which Mac Grianna translates as simple sentences beginning with '*bhí'.* Mac Grianna has rendered Conrad's one sentence into four sentences beginning with *bhí* whereas the French translation provides an almost word for word translation of Conrad's sentence. Mac Grianna most emphatically does not. His omissions within the vocabulary of the sentence are 'shadowless' 'smooth and level', 'glowing embers', and 'iridescence.' In such a case, it is easy to empathise with An Gúm's reader's sense of disappointment at such omissions: each one is part of an atmospheric build-up, part of Conrad's desire to paint the picture and part of his impressionistic style. There is a painterly feel to Conrad's sentence, a sense of chiaroscuro in the steady glow of the embers against the moonlit sky and a nihilistic feel in the human figure dwarfed by elemental nature. This feeling is lost in Mac Grianna's bald sentences.

These omissions are the most obvious losses to the translation, but there are others, within the syntax itself. Conrad is making his impressionistic picture with a build-up of impressions, of images, the complex syntax is mimicking the layering of paint to produce the most evanescent and transient of effects, as might be found in painting by an impressionist painter. Mac Grianna's plainness provides a simplistic rather than simple rendition of Conrad's sentence. Perhaps the most appropriate way to describe what he has done to Conrad here is to be found the Irish way of saying 'describe' – that is 'cur síos', to put down. Mac Grianna has simply put down the bare bones of Conrad's fully-fleshed-out picture: he has given us a cartoon, a sketch, rather than a completed painting.

His translation of the following sentence, however, reveals a differnent approach, as if, having found the previous sentence somewhat of a slog, he now recovers his inspiration. It is true that he makes five sentences of Conrad's one and that four of these five sentences begin with *bhí* (I include Mac Grianna's first sentence which begins with *Agus bhí*).

> On three sides of the clearing, appearing very far away in the deceptive light, the big trees of the forest, lashed together with manifold bonds by a mass of tangled creepers, looked down at the growing young life at their feet with the sombre resignation of giants that had lost faith in their strength. And in the midst of them the merciless creepers clung to the big trunks in cable-like coils, leaped from tree to tree, hung in thorny festoons from the lower boughs, the big trunks in cable-like coils, and, sending slender tendrils on high to seek out the smallest branches, carried death to their victims in an exulting riot of silent destruction. (*AIF*, p.165)

> Agus bhí sí ag síor-chur uaithe feitheóg caol [*sic*] a bhí ag breith go fáilthidhe ar na craobhacha a b'anbhfainne de na crainn agus ghá bplúchadh chun báis, mar bhéadh oll-phiast ar bh'é a cuid de'n tsaoghal bheith ag scrios léithe go sanntach síorruidhe.: Bhí crainn mhóra na coilleadh ar thrí thaoibh de'n ghort, agus cuma ortha leis an tsolas go rabh siad i bhfad ar shiubhal. Bhí siad feistighthe dá chéile leis an chas-choill, agus bhí siad ag amharc anuas ar an gheamhar agus iad mar bhéadh fathaigh a bhéadh fá ghruaim cionn's gur chaill siad dóchas i n-a gcuid urraidh. Na ba neamh-thrócaireach amach an greim a bhí ar na crainn mhóra ag an chas-choillidh sin na bhfeitheóg fada. Bhí sí greamuighthe go daingean do n-a mbun agus sínte ó chrann go crann i n-a feistigheacha fighte a bhí lán dealg féar. (*DCA*, p.227)

> attachés ensemble par les mille liens d'une masse de lianes enchevêtrées, abaissaient leur regard sur la jeune vie en train de pousser à leur pied avec la sombre résignation de géants qui ont perdu toute confiance en leur force. Et, au milieu d'eux, les lianes impitoyables s'accrochaient aux grands troncs en anneaux semblables à des cordages,: sautaient d'arbre en arbre, pendaient des branches basses en guirlandes épineuses et lançant vers le ciel de frêles vrilles à la recherche des plus petites branches, apportaient la mort à leurs victimes en un débordement triomphal de destruction silencieuse.(*FA,* p142)

In translating thes sentences, however, Mac Grianna seems once again inspired by Conrad's descriptive strengths. The sentence is given an almost word-for-word treatment by the translator in French. Not so by Mac Grianna. In terms of structure, this is a very tightly-woven sentence which Mac Grianna has unpicked to allow the more expansive weave of Irish. Instead of Conrad's two sentences, the Irish has five, four of which begin with *bhí* or *agus bhí*. Mac Grianna's one sentence that does not begin with '*bhí'* is based on a sentence using the substantive verb, but with a fronted clause for emphasis 'Na ba neamhthrócaireach amach an greim a bhí ar na crainn mhóra'. The original's two sentences contain 107 words, whereas Mac Grianna's equivalent five sentences contain 144 words. Even so there are a number of omissions in the passage as a whole, in these first sentences, for example, he has

not given any equivalent for ‘deceptive’ and ‘resignation’. Three connected phrases in Conrad’s first sentence are expanded into the first and second sentences of the translation, each one beginning with *bhí*. One way to illustrate the difficulties that Mac Grianna faces is to attempt to translate the sentence by following the order of Conrad’s sentence as far as possible in Irish and see if it will work as one sentence in Irish also. This is a potential translation, using Mac Grianna’s vocabulary and syntax as far as possible:

> Ar thrí thaoibh den gort, agus cuma orthu leis an tsolas go raibh siad i bhfad ar shiúil, feistighthe dá chéile leis an chaschoill, bhí crainn mhóra na coille ag amharc anuas ar an gheamhar, mar bheadh fathaigh a bheadh fá ghruaim cionn’s gur chaill siad dóchar ina gcuid urraidh.

The *abairt bhacach* would appear as follows:

> Ar thrí thaoibh den gort, agus cuma orthu leis an tsolas go raibh siad i bhfad ar shiúil, ***bhí crainn mhóra na coille****,* feistighthe dá chéile leis an chaschoill, ***bhí siad*** ag amharc anuas ar an gheamhar, mar bheadh fathaigh a bheadh fá ghruaim cionn’s gur chaill siad dóchar ina gcuid urraidh.

It is clear from this that, short of using the *abairt bhacach* the subject of the sentence, *crainn mhóra na coille* have to have a large amount of descriptive adjectival phrases preceding them before their debut appearance in the sentence. There are a full 24 words coming before the subject in the sample Irish sentence, compared to 14 in Conrad’s original English and 12 in the French translation. The entire sum of descriptive phrases with which Conrad has surrounded the subject must, because of Irish VSO syntax, precede the subject in Irish, leading to a top-heaviness which is confusing for the reader. The most easily understood way for this sentence to be translated is indeed Mac Grianna’s, where he has made two sentences beginning with *bhí*, and brought the subject of the verb, *crainn mhóra na coille*, forward to its assigned place beside the preceding verb. There may be an element of simplification here, but it is the only way to deal with Conrad’s sentence in Irish that makes it clear to the reader. Again this may have been the sort of simplification that the anonymous reader from An Gúm objected to, but there was little Mac Grianna could have done to change it.

Neither is this a case of simplifying complicated English into apparently simpler Irish for the sake of a readership of learners. Mac Grianna has dealt with Conrad’s complex sentence in the best way possible, while retaining clarity of meaning in the sentence. The reason is that of the challenges which the translation

of SVO syntax in English throws up in the VSO syntax of Irish. Mac Grianna's translation is however, very different in word order alone from Conrad's, so in a comparison of the English with Irish, as the anonymous reader might have made, it may have been difficult to reconcile the two as a similar sentence.

> On three sides of the clearing, appearing very far away in the deceptive light, the big trees of the forest, lashed together with manifold bonds by a mass of tangled creepers, looked down at the young life at their feet, with the sombre resignation of giants that had lost faith in their strength. And in the midst of them the merciless creepers clung to the big trunks in cable-like coils, leaped from tree to tree, hung in thorn festoons from the lower boughs, and, sending slender tendrils on high to seek out the smallest branches, carried death to their victims in an exulting riot of silent destruction.(*AIF*, p.165)

> Bhí crainn mhóra na coilleadh ar thrí thaoibh de'n ghort, agus cuma ortha leis an tsolas go rabh siad i bhfad ar shiubhal. Bhí said feistighthe dá chéile leis an chas-choill, agus bhí said ag amharc anuas ar an gheamhar agus iad mar bhéadh fathaigh a bhéadh fá ghruaim cionn's gur chaill siad dóchar i n-a gcuid urraidh. Na ba neamh-thrócaireach amach an greim a bhí ar na crainn mhóra ag an chas-choillidh sin na bhfeitheóg fada. Bhí sí greamuighthe go daingean do n-a mbun agus sinte ó chrann go crann i n-a feistigheach fighte a bhí lán dealg féar. Agus bhí sí ag síor-chur uaithe feitheóg caol a bhí ag breith go fáilthidhe ar na craobhaca a b'anfhfainne de an crainn agus ghá bpluchadh chun báis, mar a bhéadh oll-phiast ar b'é a cuid de'n tsaoghal bheith ag scrios léithe go sanntach síorraithe. (*DCA*, p.227)

> Sur trois côtés de la clairière, paraissant tres lointains dans la lumière tompeuse, les grands arbres de la forêt, atttachés ensemble part les mille liens d'une masse de lianes enchevêtrées, abaissaient leur regard sur la jeune vie en train de pousser a leur pied avec la sombre resignation de géants qui ont perdu toute confiance en leur force. Et, au milieu d'eux, les lianes impitoyables s'accrochaient aux grands troncs en anneaux semblables a des cordages sautaient d'arbre en arbre, pendaient des branches basses en guirlandes épineuses et, lançant vers le ciel de frêles vrilles á la recherche des plus petites branches, apportaient la mort a leurs victimes en un débordement triumphal de destruction silencieuse. (*FA*, p.142)

Mac Grianna's tussles with syntax in translating English into Irish do not necessarily explain his omissions of adjectives and nouns, such as *deceptive* and *resignation* in Conrad's first sentence here. An examination of Mac Grianna's idiosyncratic translation of Conrad's second sentence gives some insights. Where Conrad writes the subject phrase 'the merciless creepers', Mac Grianna transfers the adjective 'merciless' from the creepers to the grip that they have on the trees. Conrad has given this adjective to the creepers as a cover-all modifier to describe all their activities, clinging to the tree trunks, hanging in thorn festoons, leaping from tree to

tree and ultimately destroying the trees. This may be an example of Ó Nualláin's principle 14, where Irish is being more concrete than English, as well as following that of principle 5, where epithets must, of necessity, be transferred. It is Mac Grianna's intention to break this sentence up into further sentences, in this case he makes three sentences of it. The first sentence explains the vice-like grip of the creepers upon the trees. The second contains further description, the creepers being stuck to the bottoms of the branches (*bhí siad greamaithe go daingean do n-a mbun*) and stretched from tree to tree (*agus sínte ó chrann go crann).* There is a significant difference of mood and tense from English to Irish here: Conrad's creepers are active, they are accompanied by verbs in the simple past tense – they clung, leaped, hung and carried – the 'merciless creepers' are the active perpetrators of these deeds. Mac Grianna's '*cas-coill'* is much less active: it is stuck ('g*reamuighthe*'), and stretched ('*sínte*'), past particulate adjectives, governed by the substantive verb in the past tense, *bhí*. It is only in the third sentence that the '*cas-coill'* becomes the subject of an active verb,' *bhí sí ag síor-chur uaithe'*, in the progressive rather than the simple past tense, a not unusual occurrence in Irish, where, as I have previously discussed in this chapter, progressive aspect is much more frequently employed than in English. (A slightly earlier example of occurs when Conrad's trees 'looked down', whereas, in Mac Grianna's translation, they are *ag amharc a*n*uas*' (looking down.)

In his third sentence Mac Grianna seems to go completely off-script and allow his imagination to expand considerably Conrad's original. He introduces a character, he personifies the 'merciless creepers', the '*cas-coill*', the underhand undergrowth. Mac Grianna describes his 'c*as-coill*' as 'mar a bhéadh oll-phiast ar b'é a cuid de'n tsaoghal bheith ag scrios léithe go sanntach síorraithe'. Conrad's intention seems to be that of personifying the creepers as merciless and ruthless killers of the trees. Mac Grianna feels the need to re-personify the equivalent '*cas-coill*' as an '*oll-phias*t', a monstrous serpent-like creature into which the '*cas-coill*' evolves, in order to carry out its murderous task. In this he strays very far indeed from the original text.

It is a thought-provoking undertaking to conjecture as to the reason Mac Grianna feels he should create this image. We can extrapolate from Conrad's original that the creepers appear and act like constricting serpents who crush their

victims to death. Creepers themselves are long, snake-like growths which cling to stationary objects like trees and walls. Mac Grianna has chosen '*cas-choil*l' to carry forth this image. *Cas-choill* is defined as 'scrub' or 'undergrowth' by *FGB* (p.196), not something which creates the same snaking image. Mac Grianna does give his '*cas-coil*l' added creepers or vines (*feitheogaí*) and adds the adjective *fighte* (woven) to it in his second sentence 'Bhí sí greamuighthe go daingean do n-a mbun agus sínte ó chrann go crann i n-a feistigheach fighte a bhí lán dealg féar.' So Mac Grianna does provide an image that equates with the 'creepers' in Conrad's original. He must feel that this is not enough adequately to provide the build-up that occurs in Conrad's sentence bringing us to the image of the creepers as ruthless killers, and therefore the '*cas-co*ill' requires a further image, a fully-drawn-out expression of its merciless and serpentine qualities.

This build-up of tension in the sentence by Conrad, bringing the reader towards the destructive nature of the creepers, is expertly accomplished by Mac Grianna, in a way which does not copy the original sentence, but by remaining true to the structure and norms of the target language of Irish. He provides a three-sentence structure to Conrad's one sentence. The first of his sentences begins with the fronted or emphasised phrase 'Na ba neamh-thrócaireach amach an greim a bhí ar na crainn mhóra ag an chas-choillidh sin na bhfeitheóg fada.' The emphasis is on the mercilessness of Conrad's creepers. Lack of mercy and ruthlessness are established there as key themes of the next sentences, Mac Grianna uses this sentence to establish the theme that will be carried on into the next sentence. By fronting the concept of mercilessness, Mac Grianna makes it more emphatic than Conrad. These two sentences begin with '*Bhí*' and '*Agus bhí*'. This repetition propels the sentences along, 'Agus bhí' giving the reader the clue that the moment of climax or culmination has arrived. The first two sentences are significantly shorter than the last, (19, 23 and 44 words respectively) and provide the build-up that the final culminating sentence needs. The final sentence, however, is a clear example of Mac Grianna not only getting to grips with Conrad's prolixity, but moving away from the restriction of literal translation to the creation of the image of the '*oll-phias*t', an image which derives from Mac Grianna's own interpretation of this sentence, of how his imagination has been piqued by Conrad's writing: this image is one he has

extrapolated from his reading of Conrad's sentence, where Conrad's serpentine creepers have transformed themselves into the actual image of a serpent.

It could be suggested that in this act of creating an image which does not actually exist in the original text, Mac Grianna has overstepped the translating mark, he has gone too far. In the more prescriptive days of translation theory, that may have been so: in these more enlightened and descriptive times, this can be viewed as a small but nonetheless exciting example of the creative inspiration that can be transferred from one creative writer to another in the act of translating each other's work. It might also be attributed to the storytelling tradition which could be said to form the background to everything that he writes. In the Irish myth and folklore, 'scary monsters and supercreeps' were commonplace. It might be argued that the influence of a childhood steeped in this storytelling tradition prompted Mac Grianna to put bones upon Conrad's more abstractly worded image. Mac Grianna certainly seems to feel that he requires the addition of this image in order adequately to replicate Nida's equivalence in translating this sentence. He uses the undergrowth, or '*cas-choill*' as the subject of the sentence rather than following the original and using the 'creepers' as his subject, he merely makes them a feature of the undergrowth 'Na ba neamh-thrócaireach amach an greim a bhí ar na crainn mhóra ag an chas-choillidh sin na bhfeitheóg fada'. Having created such a diminution in prominence within the image, he may have felt that the image of the '*oll-phias*t' should be added in order to do full justice to the source text. In creating the triple sentence form from one sentence in the original, Mac Grianna, by using the pattern of two short sentences followed by one of roughly twice that length, creates equivalent suspense to that which Conrad produces in his build-up of sub-clauses. He once again uses his trademark stylistic traits, the use of repetition and alliteration, a triplet of sentences to create this climactic development, all gleaned, as ever, from his background in the Irish storytelling tradition.

Conclusion

This chapter has examined some of the challenges thrown up by Conrad's style and how Mac Grianna dealt with them, as well as how the prevailing objections to phenomena such 'Gaeilge dhroimbhriste' and 'Gaeilge bhacach' may have impinged upon his consciousness in the translations. Conrad's use of pre-verbal

negative adjectives makes Mac Grianna flex his translating muscles to produce highly idiomatic resolutions to the translating problems posed. The pre-nominal sentence style allows him to pull the original apart and reconstruct it in his own way. He has also employed techniques that were maligned or considered inadequate – 'bad Irish', in his day. Although his strategies incur occasional 'losses', some adjectival omissions, for example, his depth of knowledge of both the languages with which he was dealing, as well as his creative writer's ability to occasionally extend a metaphor or pace a sentence in a rhythmic, lyrical way gives the reader the added flavour of Mac Grianna within the translation and provides an unexpected literary bonus for the bi-lingual reader of these books.

Summary and Conclusion

This case study of the translations made by Seosamh Mac Grianna of four of Joseph Conrad's works has attempted to give an evaluation of Mac Grianna's quality as a writer even when taking on the (by him) despised work of translation. Despite his dislike of the work of translation itself, and his fraught relationship with An Gúm, the government department responsible for producing literature for schools and translations for public consumption, Mac Grianna did admire Conrad as a writer and for this reason, if no other, it can be presumed that he would attempt to create acceptable translations of his work. This study investigates these translations, in order to produce evidence of both Mac Grianna's worth as a translator and to consider how he may have demonstrated his ability as a creative writer within the translations.

In the first instance, an overview is given of the development of translation studies since earliest times, and how various commentators have tried to decide on the merits of 'literal' versus 'free', or 'domesticated' versus 'foreignised', this bi-lateralism, or dichotomy which will always, as it were, hang over translation because of the differences within the two languages that are being translated. These differences usually end by proving that the holy grail of a 'good' translation might remain forever elusive, while the supposed failure of a supposed 'bad' translation will always remain a matter of opinion and debate. Early Irish translations very much kept their target audience and target language to the fore, replacing tales of mythology of the ancient classical world with 'equivalent' tales from familiar mythology which would be well-known to the target audience. The essential meaning or 'lesson' of the text was the important consideration rather than that of providing a literal rendition. The twentieth century witnesses a proliferation of theory regarding translation, from the minutiae of linguistic theory, and the wider, more contextualised remit of polysystem theory to the latter half of the century, when the philosophical approach of Steiner and Derrida's deconstructivism go hand in hand with post-colonial theory and its take on translation, something which is highly relevant to Ireland, as a country with a long history of colonisation and a deeply ambivalent relationship with its coloniser, Britain.

The thesis proceeds to consider the context of nineteenth and early twentieth century by examining the opinions of two key individuals in the annals of Irish translation studies. An tAthair Peadar Ua Laoghaire, writing at the turn of the twentieth century, at the height of the revival of the Irish language, had very decided and somewhat inflexible opinions with regard to how English should be translated into Irish. The author of *Séadhna* (1907), he championed the concept which became known as *caint na ndaoine*, the people's speech, which proposed the promotion of Irish as it was spoken, rather than as it had been written by the likes of Seachrún Céitinn in the seventeenth century. Ua Laoghaire's elevation of *caint na ndaoine* as the template for an Irish-speaking future has much to recommend it: it advises the use of a clear, simple and rich folk language, free from the weight, pomposity, and crucially, complexity of a formal written standard, which might be beyond the comprehension of many native speakers of the language. His translation of the English phrase 'forgive and forget' as *is breá an rud an fhoighne* ('patience is a fine thing') may, however, appear inadequate as an 'equivalent' of the English phrase, seeming to omit both the concepts of forgiving and forgetting, both of which exist in the Irish language, though they may not have come together as an idiomatic phrase in Irish as they have in English. This might be cited as an example where the concept of 'domestication' of a translation falls down and does not provide the crucial essential meaning of the phrase, which in this case was the title of the Maria Edgeworth story under discussion by Ua Laoghaire, and therefore may be considered as the key theme of the work. Ua Laoghaire's opinions were, in general, enthusiastically received and persist in the advice to translators today by An Gúm under the aegis of the Irish language authority, *Foras na Gaeilge*.

Gearóid Ó Nualláin, a follower and sometime collaborator of Ua Laoghaire's, was one of first to create a set of guidelines or principles that should be followed in the translation of English to Irish. The principles propose a 'domesticated' translation and point the way to avoid the pitfalls of *Béarlachas* (the influence of English upon both the vocabulary and syntax of the Irish language). In setting down these principles, which in modern translation theory would be considered a prescriptive act, Ó Nualláin actually provides us with a linguistic evaluation of the key differences in the languages, such as the dissimilarities in passive and active voices in the language. However, when it comes to describing such rhetorical effects as

metaphor and simile, in other words, the pre-eminent ways to translate creative thought, his terms become vague and imprecisely defined, employing terms such as'highly coloured' or stating that the Irish language is 'more restrained and matter of fact' than the English language. Mac Grianna's translations of Conrad are investigated in the light of these principles, which provide an thought-provoking statement of the prevailing thinking on translation contemporaneous with Mac Grianna. The translations are examined to find instances where Mac Grianna's work upholds Ó Nualláin's principles. An outstanding example of this is his use of 'gan' preceding a noun to translate Conrad's lists of negative adjectives, which gives the work a rhythm and punctuation that does not exist in the original, nor in the French translations. This is our first indication of the beauties of Mac Grianna's style, demonstrating as it does, the beauties of *caint na ndaoine*, with its roots in the oral story-telling tradition which was still very strong in Mac Grianna's *áit dhúchais*, Rann na Féirste, in the Donegal Gaeltacht.

Having shown a high degree of creativity on Mac Grianna's part, even in his translation work, the dissertation proceeds to investigate the level of creativity that he demonstrates in his translations of Conrad by an examination of Guildford's nine qualities that are possessed by creative individuals. That he is a creative individual is amply illustrated by his own writing, which brings literature from the Donegal Gaeltacht into the modern era in his novels and short stories. Liam Ó Dochartaigh writes in '*Mo Bhéalach Féin*: Saothar Nualitríochta' in *Scríobh 5* (1981) that:

> Ar an mbealach céanna gur léirigh an tOllamh Seán Ó Tuama gur nuafhilíocht, faoi mar a thuigtear an téarma sin do lucht litríochta, í filíocht Sheáin Uí Ríordáin, is féidir a léiriú dar liom gur soathar nualitríochta, faoi mar a thuigtear an téarma sin freisin sa chomhthéacs Eorpach, é *Mo Bhéalach Féin.*(1981, p.240)

In addition it investigates what level of this creativity does Mac Grianna bring in the act of translating, when he is not the primary author of the work? Guildford, an American psychologist who was among the first to try to define the psychology of the creative individual in the 1950s, produced a set of qualities which he contended were possessed by creative individuals. These are fluency, novelty, flexibility, an ability to synthesise and a corresponding ability to analyse, ability to reorganise or define, ability to deal with complexity and evaluation. Examples are given of Mac Grianna rising to each of these challenges within the work. Fluency, for example, should be a

prerequisite for any writer, creative or otherwise. There is also the meaning that concerns an individual's facility in a language, and, as we know, Mac Grianna was bilingual. It is clear from his expressive responses to Conrad's lyricism that he reached levels of inspiration and beauty in his writing that provide us with equivalence which matches and at times, surpasses the original. His lavish use of the techniques gleaned from the Irish storytelling tradition, such as his sumptuous application of alliteration, as well as his employment of repetition to create rhythm within his sentences, combined with unusual and creative uses of vocabulary, utilising his extensive vocabulary of the Irish of his native Rann na Féirste, and a keen perceptive ability to show fine distinctions of meaning, all mark him out as a creative person who fulfils Guildford's requirements.

Having established his credentials for creativity and imagination, there remains the question of Conrad's style and how the complexities of this style are dealt with by him. Conrad's style is the result of a combination of many factors: his tri-lingualism in Polish, French, and English, and the influence of the first two of these languages on his English style, the influence of French writers such as Flaubert and Maupassant, and their ironic tone, as well as his impressionistic style combine to challenge the translator. A glance at the examples from the translations (Irish and French) establishes that a large majority of the translation samples into French are 'word-for-word': certainly a far greater number of them fit this description than that of the Irish translations, indicating how well the French language fits Conrad's prose and demonstrating a high level of influence of that language on his English prose style. His propensity for using pre-verbal negative adjectives such as 'impenetrable' and 'inglorious' allows us to see in detail how Mac Grianna is able to use *caint na ndaoine* creatively, by his deep knowledge of the semantic range of words and phrases to produce effective translations that match and, at times, outdo Conrad's original. These translations also provide us with evidence in the use of progressive aspect in Irish, which is much greater than that of English. They also give crucial evidence that helps elucidate and extend understanding of the famous first sentence of *Mo Bhealach Féin,* in particular the implications of the meaning of the adjective *garbh* in that sentence. Unlike the more common translation of it as 'rough', it seems that, as Ailbhe Ó Corráin has suggested, it means something like very violent', as Mac Grianna's usage of it in these translations demonstrates.

Examining contemporary criticisms of Mac Grianna's translations,and accusations of 'bad Irish' and '*Gaeilge bhacach'* which were levelled at him, it is clear that Mac Grianna has given as good an account of Conrad's English as is possible. The prescriptivism of the times seems insignificant now and even a few decades after the time of writing the translations, such beliefs were beginning to lose their credibility. In terms of other criticism of Mac Grianna, it may be the case that some losses may have occurred through often unavoidable omissions, and inevitable shortening of sentences, but these are more than outweighed by his creative responses and power of imagination. I think that for these reasons, a translation by him is unmistakably his work, and that is why I recognised his unique style within the first few pages of reading *Ag Teacht fríd an tSeagal*. He brings himself to all his work, *a bhealach féin*, as it were, whether his own writings, or his translations. On those grounds, these translations by Mac Grianna of Conrad's works should be cherished and read for generations to come.

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